

Number 9
OVERCOMING ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY

Papers and Comments From The First Newberry Library
Conference On Themes In American Indian History

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THE FIRST NEWBERRY LIBRARY CONFERENCE ON THEMES IN AMERICAN INDIAN HISTORY

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Introduction

by Frederick E. Hoxie

Planning an academic conference is a bit like trying to find your seat in a darkened theatre. You have an idea of what you are going to see, and you have an image of where your seat is, but as you shift your weight back to sit down, you still don't know whether you will land comfortably or will find yourself roosting on a stranger's lap. Happily there were no screams as nearly a hundred people gathered at the Newberry Library in February of 1988 to hear three days of papers and discussions on Indian economic history. Visitors came from as far away as Australia, and significant numbers of participants were present from Canada and the four corners of the United States. The result was a stimulating, extended seminar on history, economics, and the interpretation of native experience. This volume reproduces the papers presented at the conference together with major portions of the commentary. We hope it will multiply the enthusiasm generated by the conference by suggesting new avenues for research, stimulating further debate, and informing newcomers about a developing area in American Indian history. An expanded collection of these and additional papers on economic dependency in Indian history is currently being prepared for publication. We hope that book will receive even wider distribution than this Occasional Paper, but in the meantime this publication should give students and teachers a ready resource for study.

"Overcoming Economic Dependency," was intended to encompass two areas of recent interest in American Indian history. First, there has been a growing realization that economic relations between Native Americans and others have

been either overlooked or oversimplified by scholars. There has been a growing literature on the fur trade, but little sense of broader patterns that emerged from the encounter of American and European economic systems. What is more, the economic analyses that are in print are frequently simplistic or even inaccurate. (For an extended discussion of this point, see the essay by Ronald Trosper in the forthcoming New Directions in Indian History to be published for the McNickle Center by the University of Oklahoma Press later in 1988.) Few scholars are more aware of these problems than the people working on Indian economic history. In response to my inquiries regarding the need for a conference, these scholars commonly replied, "By all means; let's get together and compare notes!" It is significant, for example, that economist Leonard Carlson, one of the conference speakers, noted in his presentation that the Newberry conference constituted his first opportunity to present Indian economic history research to an audience of people working in Indian history!

Second, as the published literature in Indian history grows year by year, students and teachers have turned increasingly to the task of synthesis. How do we make sense of a proliferating number of case studies? How do we move beyond facile generalizations? What are the themes of the "new" American Indian history? A decade ago, we were content to list those things that Indian history is not: it is not the story of assimilation, it is not the story of "savagery" versus "civilization," it is not the story of Indian victimization. Today we want to know what it is. This inquiry produced the idea of conferences on themes in Indian history. The question behind them is simple: what integrating themes--if any--help us draw individual case studies together and fashion coherent interpretations of Native American experience across a region or time period?

The structure of the conference supported the discussion of both economic history and dependency as a theme for understanding Native American experiences. Each session heard commentary from two people. The first commentator was a scholar in the field of Indian economic history who could assess the quality and value of the papers. These commentators were also urged to share their views on economic dependency as a tool for understanding economic relations between Indians and whites. The second commentator was an individual with first hand experience in contemporary Indian economic life. These speakers ranged from Chief Philip Martin of the Mississippi Band of Choctaws to Navajo agronomist Bahe Billy, to Lummi Tribal Chairman--and fisherman--Larry Kinley, and they were urged to draw on their own experiences to alter or underscore the conclusions reached in the formal papers.

Three presentations did not fit the pattern of papers and commentary. First, Stephen Gudeman, an anthropologist whose research has taken him primarily to Latin America, presented an overview of economic dependency. In his paper he traced how the concept itself emerged from the study of third world peoples and he reflected on its use at the conference. Second, historian Floyd O'Neil, who has worked with dozens of tribes as they have developed community histories, and who grew up near a Utah reservation, made himself the subject of an oral history interview. Drawing on his experiences as both a scholar and an observer of the West, he offered some original insights into the problem of Indian economic life. Finally, conference chair Daniel Usner brought the gathering to a close by identifying some of the common themes presented at the conference and pointing out the broader significance of the subject. (Usner's comments will form the basis for a short, interpretive book on economic dependency in Indian history which the Center expects to publish in 1989.)

The first Themes Conference was remarkably successful. More than twice as many people attended than we had originally planned on. The papers were uniformly stimulating, and the commentaries were both relevant and insightful. At least that's our view, and this volume constitutes our proof. Regardless of readers' evaluations, however, they should be aware that this publication was made possible by a generous grant from the Education Division of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Marilyn DeBerry assisted in the production of the text, and Center Administrative Assistant Violet Brown helped with production. Jean O'Brien and Mary Prindiville deserve special mention for swooping down on the Center to help with final conference arrangements. Volunteer Jane Levin was a superb conference assistant. The Center's Editor and Assistant Director, Jay Miller, carried out the unglamorous but essential task of explaining simple instructions, assembling papers, serving as culture broker between word processing systems, supervising the transcription of taped remarks, and shepherding the text through production and duplication. We hope you will agree that the contributions of all these people are reflected in the quality of our ninth Occasional Paper in Curriculum.

DEPENDENCY: A VIEW OF THE NORTH FROM THE SOUTH

Stephen Gudeman
Department of Anthropology
University of Minnesota

I begin these reflections on dependency and the Indian experience with a vignette from Latin America.

To the east of Bogotá and the far slopes of the Colombian Andes lie the northern plains of South America. The llanos, as they are known, stretch nearly halfway across Colombia to Venezuela in the northeast and the Amazonian basin in the south. A few years ago, I was working - with my Colombian colleague - in this vast zone, traveling towards the area where the llanos meet up with the Amazonian forest. Much of this flat and treeless region, devoted to cattle grazing, is sparsely inhabited. But situated high on a knob towards the southern end is a center of human activity. Known as Loma Linda or "pretty hill," this is the Colombian home of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Staffed by citizens of the United States and backed by North American money, the center contained 40 - 50 teams of translators, mostly spouses. Each pair lived for extended periods with a native group in order to learn and transcribe the local language, the ultimate goal being to translate the English bible into the local idiom so that the word of God might reach the farthest corners of the earth and unite in a single faith all humans. For the most part, the translators are trained field linguists who also have a religious commitment to bringing the Word to those not of their credence.

By most religious standards, I would be classed as an infidel, and as an anthropologist I have a chronic - sometimes hypersensitive - allergy to the activities of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. (As a Colombian wag once remarked, "It is neither an institute nor about linguistics nor in the summer.") So, it must be said that with something less than perfect detachment, I left off fieldwork for a few days to visit the SIL where, to be certain, everyone was very cordial.

The site of the SIL had been selected because it resembled - from the air - the original grounds of the group established elsewhere in Latin America; if I recall correctly the land had been loaned at no cost by the Colombian government. Despite this national sovereignty, the area was surrounded by a wire fence. Entering by a gate, then moving through trees, and being careful not to be run over by teenagers racing about on motorscooters, one passed first a small airport with tower. Several planes were parked on the apron, one of which had the special capacity to make short takeoffs and landings. On their fuselages, three stickers showed that the planes belonged to the SIL but had been provided by the Colombian airforce and financed by the United States Agency for International Development. In other words, they had been purchased by the U.S. taxpayer. Elsewhere on the grounds were located communal and administrative buildings, and each spousal pair had a separate dwelling to which they could return after undertaking linguistic fieldwork and being airlifted home. We ate in the communal dining hall where recent Hollywood films were also screened; all the food was flown in, much of it from the United States, so it was quite different from what was consumed elsewhere on the llanos. The missionaries explained that the immediately surrounding area could not meet the center's sizable needs so supplies were imported. Everyone inside the fence

spoke English, even the cooks, and only a few seemed to be conversant in Spanish. Some inhabitants had arrived straight from the United States in order to spend their vacation time helping as mechanics or in other ways.

One lunchtime, after hamburgers and french fries, I was enjoying the Colombian sunshine when I noticed a quiet, slightly agitated, native South American standing nearby. He was dressed in European clothing, and spoke English. He came from a distant Amazonian group, and it seemed that some years previously he had been converted by SIL missionaries and then had had a falling out with the people of his society. So, he had been brought to Loma Linda where he assisted the SIL, spoke English, ate hamburgers, used shoes, and wore pants with a belt. He talked about the United States, all the while admiring our material things and accomplishments. But this thirty year old man stuttered, slurred words, spoke of having nightmares, and seemed unable to fix his visage on one spot while he talked. He was disturbed, while in his eyes there was fright. In that serene, isolated spot he surely had no physical fears or needs, but his terror was no less the real, for he had lost a way of life and his identity had now to be constructed through the things and symbols of a different culture and alien people. He was dependent physically, culturally, emotionally, economically, and in every other way on the SIL; and little doubt this was a terror.

I have sometimes felt that if we could penetrate the complex layers of this man's experience, from the economic to the symbolic, other instances of dependency would become the more amenable to understanding. Aspects are clear: Loma Linda is an "enclave," like an "enclave economy" where outsiders mine an ore or raise bananas. The land occupied by the enclave was gained through action of the state which also provided some of the means of transport. None of this would have happened without the backing of international capital, especially the monetary power of the United States which provided the resources for purchasing the transport vehicles and whose people furnished the funds to support the fieldwork of the missionary pairs. Unlike the private enterprise enclave, the SIL has no profit motive and promises no remittances to the home economy, its sole objective being to capture human souls in that grand accumulation for the divine entrepreneur. In passing, personal costs are incurred, infelicities happen, and short-term dependency is created, but the grand intentions of the larger endeavor, the good it will confer, and the unremitting efforts of the enclave people themselves are said to outweigh the importance of any short-term problems. But do they, for will not the larger project itself create an even more insidious dependency than even its transient influences?

Dependency theory, as first elaborated in Latin America, seems to me to be only one of many voices in a larger conversation concerned with the identity, the viability and the independence of Latin America. Some of the most persuasive and forceful voices in this grand conversation about the difficulties of existing within the shadow of the United States have been those of writers such as Carlos Fuentes, Octavio Paz and Gabriel García Márquez. But there are other strong voices, such as the Brazilian author, Márcio Souza, and Daniel Ortega! Everyone "hears" everyone else, though it may not always appear so.

The economic theory of dependency, then, is one expressions of this larger, Latin critique.¹ Others have added to it, and it has been employed outside its home region, but the theory - as it is called - has a place where it was first articulated and for which it was originally intended. Contributors to the theory have come from such different areas as Mexico and Brazil; and the theory is usually said to cover all of Latin America from Mexico through Central

America, the Isthmus and the southern continent. This is a broad scope, and there is much disagreement among the contributing voices themselves. Even the theory contains its paradoxes, being an admixture of neoclassical economics and Marxism, and normally the adherents of these two views - or faiths - do not make pillow talk. But for the anthropologist, dependency theory is interesting because it is a local voice, a part of a Latin conversation, directed to understanding past and present experience in that world region. Viewed as a cultural product itself, the dependency model is neither "correct" nor "incorrect" but an attempt to change the world by persuading others of its veracity. Whether this local model is transferrable to other parts of the world, such as the United States, is a question I shall discuss. Whether such local voices have been raised in other "dominated regions," such as native American reservations in the United States, and then forged into a critical model, such as dependency theory, is a question to which little attention has been given.

The dependency model is historical in scope, for it sees present day problems in terms of the European settlement of the New World, and of the New World's experience in coping with that continuing conquest. Most of the major dependency analyses have been applied to historical evidence, and for the most part instantaneous or synchronic analyses of society are eschewed. I welcome the understanding which an historical view and evidence can offer, but history does not tell us everything about current and changing social life which suggests there may be a place in dependency theory for a more institutional and structural viewpoint.

The touchstone of the dependency model is a practical issue: the "underdevelopment" of Latin America. Dependency is not a general theory about markets, value or social classes but has a pragmatic focus. Why is much of Latin America beset by an undeveloped infrastructure, high population growth, health problems, relative lack of industrialization, and pockets of uncompetitive agriculture? Dependency theory also has a decidedly economic focus. It does not attempt to explain why humans sometimes respond to persistent poverty with violence and strikes nor does it give much attention to the political, social and cultural features of society. In recent years, Celso Furtado has claimed that dependency theory offers a totalizing view, and political scientists have taken it in new directions.² Certainly, the dependency model is more "institutionalist" in scope than "pure" market analyses, and there have been some important sociological contributions to it, but dependency theory is principally devoted to understanding "economic" issues.³ In my estimation as a social anthropologist, the model lacks tools for analyzing local processes; and as a cultural anthropologist I would add that the entire range of beliefs, views, and constructions of social relations - or how people make and live their world - is missing from the model. Dependency theory seeks to "explain" how Latin America was remade "after" (in both time and image) the interests of colonial and postcolonial Europe and North America, but what of the New World's own history and culture as made evident by the dependency voice itself?⁴ Also, if there is dependency, then someone is dependent, and that compliance needs to be explained, for the other side of force is consent and belief in the legitimacy of a power relationship. How do we understand, for example, the reasons for the terrorized consent of the Amazonian native who becomes missionized and joins the Summer Institute of Linguistics?

Still, as I understand it, dependency is a "loose" model allowing for different "histories" to be examined. It does not espouse the existence of a single institutional mechanism in history but tries to encompass the disparate

contexts of pillaging, plantations, enclave economies and multinationals. The model's strength, and weakness, is the general viewpoint it offers us.

But let us turn to the model itself and its principal themes. According to a widely shared dependendista thesis, a single world system of capitalism exists, and this includes not only Latin America today but has done so since the Conquest.⁵ This world system is neither uniform nor unchanging. Its earliest form, for example, was mercantile capitalism when gold and silver from Mexico, Panama, Colombia and Peru were secured to help balance and augment the national treasuries of the Iberian nations. But - according to the dependency thesis - the motive to accumulate capital has remained constant from the Sixteenth Century until now. This thesis has evoked heated responses from Marxists who claim that in early periods, and even today, parts of Latin America were and are "feudal."⁶ The argument between dependency theorists and Marxists revolves about whether there are different coexisting modes of production, such as feudalism and house production, that are "articulated" with capitalism, or whether there has been a single mode of production in Latin America all along, that of capitalism itself. The Marxist claim that multiple production modes can be articulated with and made subservient to capitalism has the virtue of recognizing and specifying diversity. I happen to think the idea that there exist several "modes of production" in the elaborated Marxist sense is not well supported by the ethnographic facts, but leaving the intellectual fireworks and the mundane facts to one side, it is worth remarking that this debate has hardly arisen in the North American context; perhaps the "facts" are different or perhaps it really does matter who is voicing the argument, articulating the model and constructing the "world reality" about which we converse.

A second thesis of the dependency model is that capitalism exhibits a special form of international domination or control. Here, dependency theorists implicitly use a spatial metaphor or trope, an image to convey their argument. The world is divided into poles, near and far, and into poles within poles. Economic domination runs from a central pole to its periphery or from metropolises to satellites. To leave New York for Bogotá is to go from economic center to periphery, and to leave Bogotá for the llanos continues this same journey from a subcenter to its periphery or from a metropole to satellite. The center has monopoly control over capital, and the power to make decisions over its use; this domination spreads "downward" or "outward" from center to periphery. The specific forms of capital domination have varied in time and still vary in space. They include control of money, information and technology, cartels, military forces, and even transport routes. For example, England once had control of the seas and the transport on it which allowed that small island to control, in part, the market structure linking the New World with the Old.

One feature of the domination which the center exercises over the periphery is that the periphery, Latin America, usually provides raw materials for the center. For example, Brazil, Mexico and Peru used to provide a steady supply of sugar to Europe; Chile was a source of wheat and copper, while coffee and other "primary substances" are contemporary products of Colombia, Brazil and Central America. These products and others, such as hemp, rubber and petroleum, are subject to boom and bust cycles which have devastating effects on the local economies. In the past, only a small part of the production value of these primary commodities remained within their borders of origin. Certainly, local wages were paid, and a metropolitan élite frequently had financial interests in their production, but the receipts of the local élite often flowed to Europe to

purchase consumer and luxury goods which would justify their own local high status. This was not all, for the capital equipment to produce the commodities was usually manufactured in European or North American centers and then traded to the periphery for the raw materials. The periphery fueled the center with low cost raw materials which by its capital control could process these for sale in its home market (thus lowering the cost of its wage basket) or in the periphery itself. To put it differently, and in slightly overstated fashion, capital intensive goods produced in the center were exchanged for labor intensive goods produced in the periphery, all of which served to keep producers in the latter from accumulating capital and becoming capitalists. To express it more baldly, and with tongue in cheek, the underdeveloped areas never lacked the "Protestant Ethic;" we just kept them from having the werewithal to express it.

In the Andre Gunder Frank version of dependency, and one which I have found interesting, this center-periphery relation works "chain-like" all the way out to the rural areas of Latin America today.⁷ For example, in a small village of Panama which I studied, the local people began to replace the growing of rice for home consumption with the raising of sugar cane for cash sale.⁸ This change had to do with the Cuban revolution, the raising of United States import quotas, the shifting world price of sugar, and the ability of metropolitan families to borrow money, purchase modern refining equipment and loan cash to the peasants so that they could undertake the long production cycle of the crop. I used to muse on the fact that on hot and humid days many of the sugar cane workers would end their day by buying a cold Coca-Cola at the local store. I was hardly immune to this salacious pleasure, however a Coke cost \$.05 -.10 and the people were earning only a dollar a day, so their expenditure often represented 10% of disposable income. But the reason for my "pause" was not to question how they were allocating their wealth but to wonder whether one of the soft drink consumers might be ingesting some of the sugar he had once produced, for that would seal and exemplify the cyclical process of dependency by which the periphery produces raw materials for the center and then with its small receipts serves as consumer for the finished, capital intensive goods of the metropole. Numerous other instances of such center-periphery relations can be adduced. For example, from the llanos of Colombia, cotton is transported to the metropole of Bogota' where prices are set by marketing groups in accord with those already arranged in London and New York. With their receipts, the llanos producers buy cotton shirts, pants and dresses which have been made elsewhere in the world. Tobacco growers in the northern Andes of Colombia bear the brunt of the financial loss when demand falls in the United States; in periods of "bust," when the national tobacco companies have to reduce foreign sales, they suspend purchases at home and transfer the effect to the local level. I have seen tobacco farmers, who have mortgaged their land to pay for a crop, with a harvest sitting in the field for lack of a vendible outlet. A poignant example of this cyclical system is offered by the many children who sell contraband cigarettes on street corners in Bogota; their sale is the final link in a Mafia recycling operation designed to pay for drug shipments from Colombia to the United States. These, then, are instances of center-periphery connections in a world of international capital and trade. Once stated, it seems to me that the notion of a system or part-system in the movement and control of primary products is incontestable and selfevident, but few of my anthropological colleagues have tried to examine its effects and consequences on the local level.⁹

One implication of this argument that national and local economies are connected up to and in some respects controlled by capital movements in the

metropolises is that underdevelopment in the periphery is not a fact in its own right but a consequence of development in the center. Given a "world division of labor," the function which underdeveloped countries perform is linked to the developed ones. The Third World has been set on the course of producing primary sector goods, such as foodstuffs and raw materials, by historical events and continuing capital control. For this reason, dependency theorists argue that there are not two different economic forms in the world - the modern and the traditional, or world "dualism" as modernization theorists once suggested - but only one. Development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin, and this implies that underdevelopment is as much our problem as theirs. We are developed because they are not. The anthropologist, incidentally, sees in this relational notion of underdevelopment the idea - so often found in "tribal" groups - that how "we" identify ourselves is closely linked to how "they" identify themselves, and vice-versa. A "we" group knows itself by what it would not be, "they," just as they are partially determined by us. But this is the anthropology version, and in the case of the world market and center-periphery relationships, this human tendency to divide the world into "us" and "them" is connected up to the control of capital.

There is another part of this center-periphery model which is important though problematic. According to the dependency view, as products move from hinterlands to center, a surplus is extracted at each stage, and this surplus serves to fuel capital accumulation in each of the metropolises. Thus, when peasants or Indians in Latin America sell their products in a market or to a factor, they never receive a "just" exchange. The local bourgeoisie extracts something in the trade, and so it works up the line from satellite to metropole. In the case of pillaging by the Conquerors and of the mining of gold and silver by their successors, this surplus appropriation was surely the case. In these instances a material good, at no or low cost, flowed from Latin America to Europe; it was quite visible in the cargo holds of ships. But it is more difficult to show what this surplus is and how it is accrued in modern times. Still, the general idea that a surplus moves from periphery to center is attractive intellectually, for if true it clinches the argument that underdevelopment fuels development, and that developed countries by surplus extraction keep underdeveloped ones in a perpetual state of marginality.

This capstone of the dependency argument brings it full circle. After World War II, the Economic Commission for Latin America, guided by Raúl Prebisch, studied patterns of world trade. They divided countries into a center and periphery, and argued that there had been a steady deterioration in terms of trade for the periphery. Over time, the peripheral countries were receiving less for what they produced than before. On this view, the so-called "international division of labor" did not confer equal benefits on all parties. One recommended solution for peripheral countries, therefore, was to raise tariffs, hide behind them and promote national industrialization in the meanwhile. This was tried, but by the 1960s it became clear that the policy was not having much effect and that terms of trade continued to deteriorate for Latin American nations. From this realization precisely dependency theory grew, as a more ample explanation of the phenomenon of underdevelopment. So, having started with a consciousness of problems in terms of trade, dependency theory developed a broader model and an historical conception to understand current conditions, only to return - in some of its voices - to the issue of unequal exchange and the ways surplus is extracted from the periphery. This is not to say that a surplus is never appropriated, but it is to query whether it always occurs, whether it is

possible to know if it does and whether there may be other ways to examine the conjuncture of the developed and the underdeveloped sectors. One of the persistent weaknesses in the dependency model has been its inability and failure to examine local institutions and cultures as well as the nexus between metropole and satellite. According to the dependency view, the periphery simply reflects the center and is exploited by it. But this is a hegemonic vision of the world itself which suppresses the local voice.

Only mad dogs, Englishmen and fools would try to compare South and North America by applying the dependency model. These are different parts of the world with distinct environments and natural resources. The native groups are various, and though we speak of a European conquest, the invasion from the Iberian nations was unlike that which came from northern Europe. We are also looking at separated periods of history, when the needs and interests of the world economy were different. How can we possibly join in the same conversation mercantile capitalism, partly focused on flows of precious metals, with postindustrial capitalism? This is madness -- which must be why an anthropologist has been asked to undertake the task!

But why not? I begin by proposing a model intended to be useful in both hemispheres of the New World. For simplicity, consider the market to be a large arena where trading continuously occurs. Market actors exchange in order to gain; they buy low to sell high. The intent is to make a profit or, more formally, a return on the capital invested. This project holds for all forms of market actors, whether traders in commodities or on horseback, whether producers of automobiles or of handwoven Panama hats, whether makers of espresso machines or coffee traders in the Brazilian or Colombian countrysides.

The boundaries of the market expand and contract, but at any time it has limits, constituted by the area where profit no longer can be made. A firm can only produce so much before its final costs overwhelm its last revenues; a mine can be dug only so far given world prices for the ore. Similarly, cotton can certainly be raised on the farthest reaches of the Colombian llanos and brought to Bogotá but the roads are so poor and the transport costs are so high, the material is not cost competitive; production for the market has to cease. Conversely, and for the same reason, finished goods sent out from the capital are so expensive, the people living in the final stretches of the llanos cannot buy them. Of course, there is not an exact line that divides regions of profit from zones of loss but a constantly shifting liminal area. Economists call this boundary of profitmaking, "the margin."

But I like as well the metaphor or term, "frontier." On the one hand, the "frontier" has played a crucial role in the history of the Americas. It is a term of the Conquerors that points to the reaches and expansion of their own culture; no native American group or band thought of itself as lying beyond the frontier. To put it simply, the conquest of the New World was about expanding "the frontier;" and the trope is still used today. President John Kennedy galvanized a nation, or at least part of it, by speaking of a "new frontier." On the other hand, economists also use the word when they speak of a "production possibility frontier." This, roughly, is the extent of the goods and services which can be produced in an economy using the resources available - or I should say which can be produced at a profit using the resources available. There may be resources, as on the llanos which are part of the legal and political framework of the nation but cannot be used given the current marketing structure and level of prices. In my terminology, these lie beyond the frontier; they lie beyond the zone of profitmaking.

Let us focus, then, on situations internal to a nation, leaving aside questions about international trade and flows of capital. Within a nation, the boundary of the market, where profit can consistently be made, falls well inside the established political and legal framework - or within the area over which military force is exerted by the state. The area directly on the market frontier is a marginal zone, while beyond it market principles - buying to sell at a gain - cannot be used. The frontier is never fixed, and in capitalist economies the effort to make a profit leads people to try to expand it, but given these shifts there always exists a marginal zone and a true extra-marginal area. In my model, "dependency" has much to do with these economically frontier regions. People who live totally outside the economic frontier - and do not trade across it - have a separate, fully self-sufficient economy. But this is rare. Local dependency, if we want to use the word, is a context in which the peoples of two part-economies meet - on the margin of profit - and in which their transactions are deeply inflected by the power which one is able to exert over the other. Sometimes one economy can extract a surplus from the other, but this may not always be the case or the surplus may be minimal, for these are marginal contexts with respect to making a profit. Still, a whole range of different social, economic and cultural institutions come to the fore in frontier situations. These institutions change, but in each case they reflect the historically shifting face of profitmaking on the one side and local conditions on the other. Dependency, in this model, can be found as much in the hinterlands of Panama as on the wastelands of Utah or in the micro-business sector of St. Paul, Minnesota.

The institutions by which the profit and nonprofit sectors have been mediated vary markedly between Latin and Anglo-America. To paint the difference with a broad brush, in one - Latin America - efforts were directed to controlling labor and making resources profitable; in the other, interest was more focused on securing control of land. Consider briefly some of the Latin American patterns. Directly after the Conquest, Europeans pillaged local economies for gold, silver and other valuables. This was not economic control of the margin but looting and stealing. After this, a whole variety of European institutions were developed and tried, including the encomienda, the repartimiento and especially the hacienda. A hacienda is, in my view, simply a house economy writ large. It is a border-managing, frontier institution. The hacienda is not a corporation or commercial plantation, for above all it does not buy to sell. Instead, the hacienda reproduces many of its own own needed inputs, such as seed, foodstuffs, animals for traction, and tools. In this sense, it survives off the margin of the market. But the hacienda also sells any "surplus" it has at whatever price it can get, and this is part of its market transactions. The hacienda straddles the market frontier, selling some of its output and using no cost or part-cost inputs, otherwise it would go broke. The hacienda, which had its roots in the house economies of Spain, Portugal and the rest of Europe, served the Iberian conquerors very well in subjugating and using the labor of Indians, mestizos and poor Spanish themselves. These latter also were both in the market and out of it. The hacienda seldom bought their labor; rather it traded rights to use some of its land for a portion of the labor year of its inhabitants. These marginal folk, in turn, produced much of their own foodstuffs on the land allocated while providing some of their labor time to the hacienda for the use right. Sometimes hacienda workers sold excess produce, sometimes they received part-wages for their work, but they were never private entrepreneurs or a wage labor force.

Similarly, though in quite different form, the enclave economy represents a way to manage the frontier in order to raise an agricultural crop or mine a resource. The enclave is a foreign enterprise in native land. Like a corporation it certainly "buys to sell" but it seals itself off from the local economy. The enclave in different ways exploits sub-cost resources or uses sub-cost workers, who in turn usually have to be subsistence farmers themselves. In this way, the profit-making entity off-loads its costs; it takes its costs of operation off the market. If the market border expands, the enclave is no longer an enclave but becomes a fully corporate actor; and if the resources become exhausted or local costs rise, the enclave leaves. But while there it has a dominating influence upon the local peoples. Even after it goes, it may leave behind dependency, for if the resources such as forest or topsoil have been depleted, the original inhabitants may be forced to seek a livelihood in yet other marginal, frontier situations. The examples could be multiplied, but let us turn to North America where the social and cultural institutions, the time pattern, and the interests of the dominating economy have been quite different.

Craig Miner, in his study of the corporation and Native American, provides some complex examples of frontier management and dependency situations in the late 19th Century; his material illustrates some of the practices by which political dependency is created. In less than 20 years, he suggests, the entire Kansas area was opened to White control while the Indians were removed. This remarkably quick expansion of the market's border was accomplished by several mechanisms, old and new. In my view, underlying the entire process was the state-backed military force which the Whites possessed and had previously demonstrated. This power alone created a coercive exchange between Indian and White so that for this area the ideology of a symmetrical exchange and of free market contracts becomes just that, an ideology. Miner reads the "Indian voice" throughout this period as being one of accommodation, of wanting to help in pursuit of mutual gain, but one may also hear this voice as the expression of a dependent partner. One of the frontier mechanisms used by the larger economy was to establish enclave rights, such as rights of way for railroads. But enclaves are often sterile ventures for the host area; they create for the recipient a flow of income through royalties and fees but do not lead to capital accumulation itself. And the recipient group is dependent upon the success of the enclave over which it has no control. As the Latin American experience suggests, this leaves the recipient susceptible to boom and bust cycles generated elsewhere. But here Miner adds some very interesting material. Several Indian groups tried to charter their own railroads, others attempted to share in oil exploration on their own lands, but despite their attempts to become market participants, Indian groups were barred from entering the capital market, from crossing the capital frontier. In addition, Indian trust funds accumulated from royalties for enclave rights, were controlled in Washington, and some of these funds were used as backing for the enclave companies themselves, leaving the Indians at further risk. This is the cyclical pattern by which the periphery helps to finance the activities of the core which make their success by use of the periphery.

Miner also brings to our attention a different and often crucial aspect of the marginal context, the intermixing of race or culture and class or economic position. One reason for the financial success enjoyed by the core is its ability to control information and generate new technology. Clearly, Whites had powerful knowledge, but Miner's examples of Indian voices and strategies at the periphery show how well prepared they were to cope and to compete. Yet,

according to the dominant ideology they were lacking in experience and "nature." By such means cultural difference is used to erect and justify economic exclusion and perpetuate a frontier. These subtle ideological manipulations have had their counterparts in Latin America and in the preservation of Indian reservations.

If the anthropologist is to be classed as a mad dog for trying to comment on the work of a business historian, such as Miner, then surely - to finish out my metaphor - he is a fool for voicing an opinion on the work of an economist such as David Vinje. But - ... - fools tread everywhere. Vinje picks up the story about reservation economies in the 20th century when many native American groups have already been pushed beyond the profit frontier, being consigned to resources or economic bases that are truly marginal. Dependency, on the United States Government for financial subvention has been created, and the problem now is to devise ways of overcoming it. In this period, as Vinje shows, there is an intermixing of government and corporate power, an issue broached by Miner. This comingling of political and economic power has been a constant theme in Latin America from earliest times, when Royal land grants were established, to today when tariffs are enacted and governments allocate land and airplanes to missionaries. Vinje himself sometimes appears to comingle the concepts of dependency, economic interdependence and selfsufficiency. Dependency which occurs in the context of power differentials has to be separated from the concept of functional interdependence which is true of all market participants.¹⁰ This distinction, as I understand it, was implicit in the original Latin voice, for otherwise we are led to the conclusion that all market participation is the same, and exchanges across the margin are as equal and just as any other. One opposite to dependency is self-sufficiency, and Vinje seems to hold this out as a goal: the "independent, self-sustaining reservation economy." But this is the path which haciendas and house economies in Latin America partially pursued, and it served only to keep them on the frontier. Even more, mercantile capitalism - practiced in Spain and Portugal - was a kind of national house economy which worked only so long as a flow of wealth could be extracted from the New World. A different route away from marginality is to try to accumulate and control capital, however this takes us to the three strategies which have been tried on contemporary reservations, as discussed by Vinje.

The "primary products export pattern" described by Vinje effectively is based on an enclave right granted to a corporation which can then extract a natural resource in the reservation area. The reservation receives royalties, although the size of the flow - as in the case of Miner's examples - is subject to international cycles of boom and bust. But Vinje brings out another facet: the enclave entity which uses highly capitalized equipment, brought in and financed from the center, generates little local employment, and has no local spreading effect. Economic struggles, then, are centered on the level or rate of royalty payment rather than on the concept of the endeavor itself, and this creates a form of dependency which has many analogies in Latin America today. None the less, this enclave pattern has been justified as an instance of "comparative advantage" in that the host area is better off than it would have been without the corporate guest. Comparative advantage, however, is only one side of the story, for even if each trading partner is better off than before, one may still have an "absolute advantage" over the other. Two thousand years ago Aristotle was concerned with the problem of establishing "just prices" and fair exchanges, and the concern persisted right through the Schoolmen and to Karl Marx, whom R.H. Tawney called "the last of the Schoolmen."¹¹ This, too, has

been an undercurrent in dependency theory as well as Marxist analyses, and it takes us right back to the hypothesis that a "surplus" is extracted from the periphery.

The second pattern, so well outlined by Vinje and dating to the 1960s, is to manufacture goods on the reservation and then export them in order to increase employment. But this was done by inviting in enclave corporations, and Vinje's analysis shows what happens beyond the frontier of profit. Most of the enclave firms were not cost competitive because they were too far from their markets (that is, they were off the margin), and the firms themselves were often marginal even before they entered the reservations. (Perhaps this should lead us to formulate Gudeman's rule: marginal firms are attracted or consigned to marginal areas.) For the firms to be competitive they had to lower their wage costs, so the wage level on some reservations went below even that of the Federal transfer payments! In Latin America this same pattern often has a different outcome; low wages are paid to make the marginal enterprise profitable, so the wage earners have also to rely upon the home or domestic economy to supply part of their food needs. In this example of the "informal economy," low paid males are supported by unpaid females, children and by themselves through raising domestic food crops in unpaid time. The market system draws on uncosted resources. The house economy, which is not a profitmaking entity itself, lies beyond the market frontier but helps supply it. I have no hesitation in calling this pattern, "dependency," although who is dependent upon whom is not entirely clear! Also, whether it can be said that a "surplus" is extracted from the house economy is an interesting analytical problem.

According to Vinje, the most recent pattern found on reservations is a form of import substitution, precisely the failed pattern which helped provoke the dependency voice in Latin America. On modern reservations, this pattern also has its problems, for the market is often inadequate to create sufficient demand for the goods that can be produced; the substitute product has no local outlet. In some areas also an attempt has been made to increase the value added to products by vertical integration of processing. Years ago, Panamanians would complain that by United States Government regulation they were forced to export brown, partially refined, sugar to the United States rather than the final, consumer substance which they were also capable of producing. The U.S. Department of Agriculture claimed that this rule assured product purity by having final processing take place within national boundaries. The Panamanians were not so sanguine; they thought it was a way to keep value added within the shores of their northern trading partner.

Studies of the fur trade in North America appear to be in a boom cycle themselves much as furs were a century ago. The fur trade pattern is especially interesting because nothing quite comparable seems to have taken place in Latin America, probably for a complex of reasons including resource differences, the time periods involved, and the form and interests of the entering society. Krech and Swagerty offer us discussions about the northern and southern versions of this trade.

The American Fur Company, as Swagerty reminds us, had an important influence in regions of the midwest for nearly half a century.¹² Many aspects of this trade and its consequences fit our frontier model very well. The furs, hides and robes produced by the Native Americans were a kind of monocrop, subject to external cycles of boom and bust as well as global depressions with the brunt of these changes being borne at the margin. Both the Hudson's Bay Company and the American Fur Company were fully corporate or market

enterprises, not haciendas, whose interests and financial backing stretched from midAmerica to Europe. In some respects, each was like an enclave, with outposts and forts, though they also bridged or mediated the frontier differently from the enclave. There was less emphasis upon implanting a total European institution beyond the frontier, and the most successful of the fur traders fitted their own activities into pre-existing social and economic patterns; as we know, many local agents "took" native wives. As Swagerty describes, native groups retained monopoly control over their resource and actually prohibited the Whites from becoming suppliers of the materials themselves. The Whites did not enter into production processes by owning, organizing or working them, so the connection between the two sides was kept to the sphere of exchange. The products from the one side were produced by comparatively labor intensive methods, while those from the other were relatively capital intensive. Such "capital for labor" exchanges are typical of frontier transactions, however it appears that little money actually crossed the frontier. The exchange itself was barter, of furs for blankets and other European items. Money served as a medium of account, for the White traders and increasingly for the Indians, but was seldom used as a medium of exchange itself. This returns us to the vexing question of terms of trade which is surely linked up to the degree of independence preserved by the groups. Furs and skins, at least in the early stages, were Indian "by-products" or "waste products" gathered in the course of securing foodstuffs. Adrian Tanner claims this is still true today of the Mistassini Cree.¹³ Such "by-products" are like a surplus above reproduction needs that can be exported. But eventually, as Krech discusses, some of these means of production - food while hunting, traps and so forth - came to be filled by European goods. These were forms of "circulating capital," supplied on credit, so there was a further or deepened articulation through the sphere of circulation. Also, when the volume of trade increased, as Swagerty reminds us, the unpaid labor of females - who processed the furs and skins - came more and more to be used. These patterns can be seen as forms of dependency. But can we also speak of an "unequal exchange" between capital produced and labor produced items at the "fur" frontier? Through time, the former benefits by increases in industrial productivity which lower per item cost. Conversely, over the fifty year interval described by Swagerty, the labor time contained in the furs offered must have increased as the raw supplies diminished and the resources became exhausted. Did the terms of trade shift, and can this be said to be evidence of an unequal exchange? The account books of the Hudson's Bay Company and the American Fur Company might be valuable to examine in this regard, for it would be interesting to know about rates of trade and their change over time as well as the degree of advancing or loaning that occurred and whether this, too, increased through the years.

A detailed economic study of Indian farming in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is provided by Carlson. He examines both the transition which many groups made to farming and their success in later years. I am less sanguine than Carlson about the feasibility of applying a market theory of property rights and institutions to the premarket context of the Indians. It seems to me that Carlson groups together the different rights that may have been held over land, over animals and over small crops, and that he leaves out the varying forms of lineality and gender relations that were prevalent. Here, above all, one must examine the various local models of the economies, which were undoubtedly highly complex, and be careful in applying our own, for that itself can be a form of intellectual hegemony which makes knowledge of "them"

dependent upon "us." This aside, Carlson valuably demonstrates how Indian groups - consigned to marginal areas - were increasingly marginalized by the government policy of land allotment. As time progressed, they fell farther and farther behind White farmers. But aside from the land, its fertility and distance from market centers, most Indians could not compete because they lacked farm equipment, and this was because they lacked access to the capital market. They were, in effect, kept across the frontier, without capital and on smaller and smaller plots, on less and less usable land. But the situation may even have been worse, for Carlson also notes that many of the Indians were farming for their own subsistence, and this may have led the United States census bureau to misstate the value of their farm output.

The ninety year farming history of the Utes, which Lewis brings to our attention, repeats many of the frontier themes. Time and again the Utes were displaced, relocated, and robbed of their lands as the margin of the market, dominated by the Whites, expanded. So the Utes were continuously consigned to off-the-margin lands. The agency for these shifts was the government, pressured by corporate interests. The Utes also lacked capital to buy equipment that would have made the land more productive, but even so this would not have been a profitable investment given the land's fertility and distance from marketplaces. Traditionally, Ute farming was a female activity, so government pressure to become sedentary agriculturalists also affected gender relations and gender power as some men had to begin turning the soil. One Ute response, also mentioned by Carlson for other Indian groups, was to lease out land to White farmers which turned Utes into rentiers, though poor ones. Such leasing practices in Latin America, however, have led to further usurpation of land by entering Europeans. A second Ute practice was to farm for subsistence, a pattern noted by Carlson, and in fact this is what the Mormons had also done early on in Ute territory. In effect, both were recreating the selfsufficient house economy, even though for a short period. My argument is that this institutional pattern is created and recreated beyond the frontier where inputs cannot be purchased at a price allowing outputs to be sold. For parts of the East Coast frontier, too, American historians have been finding similar subsistence patterns.¹⁴ For the Utes the extirpation of lands increasingly marginalized them over time. Lewis sees this as increasing their economic dependency on the government for transfer payments. But this is another, more restricted use of the term, "dependency," and government subvention as final outcome should not be conflated with the many processes and market relations which gave rise to it.

The place of pastoralism on the frontier is ever-important, and in his study of cattle ranching and Indian identity, Iverson brings out themes that overlap ones already considered. In Latin America, the raising of animals, such as cattle, sheep, hogs and chickens, has played a significant role in house economies and haciendas; in combination with agriculture, pastoralism helps provide a broader material base and greater selfsufficiency. But what Iverson describes is a different stage or form of frontier use when greater specialization has already taken hold. The various groups of which he writes practiced extensive grazing which required little capital input, except for the cattle themselves. Extensive grazing is also a frontier pattern; in the classic model of von Thunen, for example, which he elaborated for Europe in the early 19th century, cattle are raised extensively beyond the border of agriculture.¹⁵ One facet of tribal cattle raising, however, was its close connection to the power of the local agent who could issue and allocate cattle for Indian use. This gave him local control. The

rise and importance of such intermediaries, both governmental and nongovernmental, has been frequently discussed for Latin America, and such brokers can serve to perpetuate contexts of dependency. But brokers, in my estimation, do not create dependency so much as rise to the fore in arbitrage-like situations that are characteristic of marginalization.¹⁶ Iverson is also concerned with the symbolic dimension of ranching or the "meaning" which cattle came to have for the groups involved. I am highly sympathetic to this interest in the symbolic dimension of material practices, but it implies knowing something more about the local models of the peoples involved, that is, how the cattle were fitted into a range of local usages and beliefs.¹⁷ Also, while the ethnic identity of various native American groups may have been threatened when the government took away an item of high symbolic importance, surely it was the very ability of the government to do so that was threatening, indeed terrorizing, as the example of Amazonian natives suggests.¹⁸ Still, there is an important theme here, for symbols and symbolic acts exert a powerful hold over our sovereign imaginations as anyone who has tried to burn an American flag will have discovered. In the 1960s, when Panama increasingly claimed that control of the Canal was an issue of national sovereignty, a group of students entered the Canal Zone, surrounded the central flag pole and lowered the United States banner; this set off one of the most violent confrontations between United States police and Panamanians then seen. Expressions of tribal identity in North America likewise have political effects, for after all many "tribes" themselves were created as much by governmental force - which labelled them and placed them as social units on bounded land - as by their own historical selfconsciousness.

The material on Northwest Coast Indian fishing rights, presented by Ziontz, brings many of our considerations full circle. He describes a process in which numerous Indian groups were steadily marginalized over 100 years until they had been fully squeezed off their rightful and needed resources. The market expanded and capital "freely" entered what once was an area of Indian resources off the frontier. Only recently, and by using legal means, have the native groups been able to re-enter and control the fishing resources whose exploitation now falls well within the margin of profitmaking. A current problem, however, concerns allocation of the resources among the newly empowered holders.

At the southern end of Colombia, high in the mountains of Nariño, an analogous process is occurring. Indian groups are staging "live-ins" and "work-ins" on mestizo and White land. They term this a "recuperation" of lands while the present landholders see it as an "invasion;" some confrontations between the possessors and dispossessed have been armed. The Indians claim that they have been pushed to the point where they have no resources on which to live, while the landholders argue that they have used the land for a long time and have improved it. Several of these "recuperations"/"occupations" have been taken to the judiciary where they have been resolved in the Indians favor, which has helped to spur more recuperations. One problem, however, revolves about who is an Indian? In this area, everyone speaks Spanish only, and physical visage is a clue to nothing. What, then, determines Indian identity upon which land claims rest? Is it culture, social affiliation, putative ancestry? One scandal erupted a few years ago when a well-meaning, Colombian anthropologist undertook a study and claimed to find no differences between Indians on the one hand and landholding peasants on the other! This reached the national press. The Indians were furious at this attack on the legitimacy of their claim, the landholders were delighted. Leaving the veracity of the study to one side, it is

gratifying to know that the academic voice and academic models occasionally have persuasive effect, even if they do not always help to overcome the indignity and poverty created by marginalization and dependency.

END NOTES

1. The writings and commentaries on dependency theory are voluminous; to begin, the reader might consult: Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, Dependency and Development in Latin America (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1979); Ronald H. Chilcote and Dale L. Johnson (eds.), Theories of Development (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1983); Andre Gunder Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967); Andre Gunder Frank, Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969); Celso Furtado, Economic Development of Latin America, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1976); Celso Furtado, Accumulation and Development (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983); Ernesto Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America," New Left Review 67 (1971):19-38; P.W. Preston, Theories of Development (London: Routledge, 1982); Stavenhagen, Rodolfo, Social Classes in Agrarian Societies (Garden City: Anchor, 1975); Stanley J. Stein, Vassouras: A Brazilian Coffee County, 1850-1900 (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1985 ((1958))); Stanley J. Stein, and Barbara H. Stein, The Colonial Heritage of Latin America (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1970).
2. Furtado, Accumulation and Development; James A. Caporaso, "Introduction" and "Dependence, Dependency, and Power in the Global System: a structural and behavioral analysis," International Organization 32 (1978):1-12,13-43; Raymond D. Duvall, "Dependence and Dependencia Theory: notes toward precision of concept and argument," International Organization 32 (1978):51-78.
3. Stavenhagen, Social Classes in Agrarian Societies.
4. Eric R. Wolf, Europe and the People Without History (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1982).
5. This thesis has been argued by Immanuel Wallerstein, although he is not a dependency theorist. See Immanuel Wallerstein, The Modern World-System (New York: Academic Press, 1974).
6. E.J.E. Hobsbawm, "A Case of Neo-Feudalism: La Convención, Peru," Latin American Studies 1 (1969):31-50; Laclau, "Feudalism and Capitalism in Latin America."
7. Frank, Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America, Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution.
8. Stephen Gudeman, The Demise of a Rural Economy (London: Routledge, 1978).
9. See, for example, Peggy Barlett, Agricultural Choice and Change: Decision Making in a Costa Rican Community (New Brunswick: Rutgers Univ. Press, 1982) and Allen W. Johnson, Sharecroppers of the Sertao (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1971), on the one hand, and William Roseberry, Coffee and Capitalism in the Venezuelan Andes (Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 1983), on the other.
10. Duvall, "Dependence and Dependencia Theory."

11. Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics* (trans. H. Rackham) London: Heinemann, 1926); R.H. Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1926), p.36.
12. Mary Whelan, "The Archaeological Analysis of a 19th Century Dakota Economy," Diss. Univ. of Minnesota, 1987.
13. Adrian Tanner, *Bringing Home Animals* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1979).
14. Christopher Clark, "Household Economy, Market Exchange and the Rise of Capitalism in the Connecticut Valley, 1800-1860," *Journal of Social History* 13 (1979):169-189; Michael Merrill, "Cash is Good to Eat: Self-sufficiency and Exchange in the Rural Economy of the United States," *Radical History Review* 4 (1977):42-71; Bettye Hobbs Pruitt, "Self-Sufficiency and the Agricultural Economy of Eighteenth-Century Massachusetts," *William and Mary Quarterly* 41 (1984):333-364.
15. Johann Heinrich von Thünen, *Von Thünen's Isolated State* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1966).
16. Norman Long, *An Introduction to the Sociology of Rural Development* (Boulder:Westview Press, 1977).
17. Stephen Gudeman, *Economics as Culture* (London: Routledge, 1986).
18. Michael Taussig, *Shamanism, Colonialism, and the Wild Man* (Chicago: Univ of Chicago Press, 1987).

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"ALL THESE THINGS SHALL I GIVE THEE"

THE AMERICAN INDIAN AND AMERICAN BUSINESS 1865-1907

Craig Miner

Willard W. Garvey Distinguished Professor of Business History

Wichita State University

In histories of the Civil War there is little talk about Indians. Yet that war set up a cultural confrontation. 19th century American industrial civilization -- with the confidence of the newly converted in the magic of its special amalgam of Adam Smith and Jesus of Nazareth-- had eliminated in the Civil War the last political and philosophical hindrance to the capitalization of Nature in as tempting a plum as ever awaited the proponents of "value added" -- the "underdeveloped" American West.

The area that had been the early 19th century's solution to the Indian problem through removal became the late 19th century's well of raw material -- vegetable, mineral, animal and human. In the perception of many Gilded Age thinkers, all these should be put to a higher use. God demanded it. To argue otherwise was, in the words of one railroad attorney, "to pronounce false and fallacious the universally accepted American idea of what constitutes human progress and achievement."¹

In the standard view, that set of assumptions, combined with the geo-political situation following the Civil War, the supposed childlike innocence and primitive economic understanding of the tribesmen, and the superior technology of the whites was bound to create dependency for Indians. Members of Congress talked about the Indian stepping aside for "a race of men heavier physically, and heavier mentally."² Indians too thought the approach of American industry was the end of their culture. They used the example of Satan tempting Jesus by taking him up to a mountaintop and show[^]ing him the empires of the world. "All these things will I give thee," the deceiver said, "if you will but fall down and worship me."

Yet it was not that straightforward. Whites and Indians during the critical period between the Civil War and the opening of the twentieth century did not play the roles historians often assign them. We must be wary of working backward from a result to a cause. There were in 1865 many plausible scenarios for the future relationship of Indians and whites in the United States, ranging from a respectful co-existence to complete assimilation of the Indian.

Outright destruction through military force or genocide was not in the cards. There was Christian conscience to be served, as well as economic requirements to be fulfilled. Contracts were as effective as cannon, and much more palatable. In business "development" of the Indian and Indian lands, it was possible to argue that both white and Indian could benefit and share in the wealth that was created in the West through the application of the most clever of modern arts.

It turned out the vision of peaceful change through mutual economic interdependency and advantage was flawed in implementation at least, but there is much evidence that few Indians or whites were aware of that at the outset of the experiment. Business accommodation seemed to the "realists" in both camps the most promising method of bringing about an inevitable change in the traditional relationship between the cultures. It worked with the Irish: why not the with the aborigines?

When an historian begins to look at Indian policy as business strategy rather than through the more common political or military lens, and tackles the voluminous and disorganized post-1880 record groups at the National Archives with this focus, certain surprising truths emerge.

Robber Barons were some of the most effective practical supporters of Indian sovereignty and the preservation of tribal governments and culture.

"Do gooders," whether their philosophical bases were anthropological, sociological, political or religious, created some of the worst intentional and unintentional damage.

Indian leaders recognized the coming economic change and created sophisticated strategies to try to control it in their interest.

The story is not so much one of broken treaties as treaties implemented all too well. The key is examining the stakes during the negotiation of treaties and understanding better the attitudes and values of the bureaucracy that interpreted and implemented them day to day.

There was no united front on either side. Representatives of the white race included George Catlin type romantics concerning the preservation of Indian culture and life ways, while there were among members of Indian tribes economic opportunists and amoral speculators worthy of comparison with any the Gilded Age produced. Internal divisions within the races encompassed every possible permutation.

Indians largely financed their own destruction. Tribal trust funds were a major capital source for companies operating in the cash-poor American West.

In the late 19th century, it became difficult to define "Indian" or "Indian consent." Due to intermarriage, matriarchal tribal rights, and substitution of elective politics for hereditary succession, Indian chiefs sometimes had as much Irish Catholic as Native American blood.

A few bands, who were unwilling to trade homeland for gifts, managed to avoid the western removals of the late 19th century. They were not forced against their "will."

Some tribes who did sign removal treaties became wealthy through exploitation of resources on their new reserves. News from Osage country salved the American conscience about the process.

There are other surprises, and there is beginning to be a literature documenting such points. To stimulate discussion in a brief compass, let me offer a few substantiating examples of the above points from the history of Kansas and Indian Territory from the Civil War to Oklahoma statehood. That was a region in which by the Civil War a good proportion of the Indian population of the United States had been concentrated. Consequently many pattern strategic experiments centered there. All of these involved U.S. business more centrally than readers of Kappler's compilation of treaties or the Congressional Record could imagine.

In 1854, when Kansas was declared a U.S. Territory, not a foot of it was legally available for white settlement. By 1871 nearly all its 10,000 Indian residents were removed.³ The process was one of force, certainly, but not simple force directly applied.

The first round of treaties in the 1850s were not removal treaties at all, but land cession treaties. These allowed Kansas tribes to remain on portions of their former reserves, granting only railroad rights of way. Their remaining reserves were adequate for their small populations, and they received significant income both from sale of ceded land and from treaty provisions for the compensated taking of railroad ties, roadbed fill, coal and building materials.

There was also the well-advertised prospect that development of towns and industry in the adjacent country would increase the value of their land should they wish to sell it.

When Kansas removal treaties were later negotiated, the tribes were both compensated for their lands in Kansas and given alternative reserves in Indian Territory. Those who resisted the deal, like certain bands of the Sac and Fox and Kickapoo, stayed in Kansas. Some who took it, like the Osages, later became, with oil checks, some of the richest people per capita on earth. There is much paradox here, as well as irony.

American businessmen thought this process was a productive exchange for all concerned: there is evidence many Indians did also. The Delaware Treaty of 1860 and the Kickapoo Treaty of 1862 are examples of this philosophy written into Kansas treaties.⁴ The Choctaw, Chickasaw and Creek treaties of 1855 follow a similar pattern in Indian Territory.⁵

One might dismiss these treaty statements and provisions as the result of coercion by sophisticated lobbyists upon primitive innocents. But mid-19th century "Indians" were not all blanket wrapped nor devoid of economic savvy. A member of the government thirty-fifth parallel railroad surveying party reported in 1853 that there were "progressive" classes among the Indians who seemed ready for a new industrial age. These tribesmen "seemed perfectly at ease in black coat, pants, vest, polished boots, and beaver hats."⁶ Cherokee chief John Ross warned in 1857 that "we cannot be insensible to the spirit of the age in which we live, nor to the circumstances which surround our lot," if Indian sovereignty were to survive at all.⁷ Ross represented the conservative traditionalist Cherokee faction. Elias C. Boudinot, representing the progressives in the tribe, submitted treaty drafts during the 1865 and 1866 negotiations that had the tribe providing land grants as well as rights of way to railroad and townsites companies.⁸ John H.B. Latrobe, attorney for the Choctaws during the 1866 negotiations, proposed that Indians be allowed to trade their lands for stock in railroad companies if the railroads would agree to resell their lands only to Indians.⁹ As late as 1870 Choctaw chief Sampson Folsom lectured a native critic of railroads for forgetting that he lived "in the blessed age of Progressivism" when red, white and black people could unite in benefitting from a single economic system.¹⁰

In both Kansas and Indian Territory, Indian tribes often submitted treaty drafts selling their lands direct to railroad companies rather than transferring them to the federal government for sale to settlers. They argued that the cash would come to them more quickly, the economic benefit to them would be greater, and the slippage due to "overhead" or fraud less this way. Contrary to all stereotypes, the restraining influence on the business enthusiasm of some of the tribal delegations were white officials of the federal government and private "watchdog" reform groups, like the Board of Indian Commissioners. Office of Indian Affairs and Department of Interior representatives had to warn the tribal delegations at Washington in 1866 of the dangers of an open invitation to American corporations.¹¹ Final treaty drafts that year contained rights of way, but not the land grants or the stock options proposed by tribal progressives.¹²

Given this situation, of which the principals were far more aware than historians have been, it was hard to argue against people like John Henderson, who pointed out in Congress that the whites were not trying to rob the Indian, but only to make him wealthy.¹³ Tribal governments could negotiate deals in

their interest on land held in common, individual Indians could grow rich through the incentive of holding property individually, or both.

The Indian knew, said these promoters, that cooperation with American industry and some changes in their tribal political and communal economic system, was their only real hope. "Red Cloud and Spotted Tail," wrote a reporter for the Emporia [Kans.] News in 1870, "must either take hold and help the white man develop the Great West, constructing railroads, working mines, and building towns, or they must be removed to new hunting grounds."¹⁴ The only "new hunting grounds" available were the "happy hunting grounds" of extermination.

Indian leaders were realistic about these stakes. "We would like to accommodate the Rail Road Company," wrote Delaware tribal officials in 1862, "We want to help them all we can and will do provided we can and do justice to our people."¹⁵

If there was a vision on both sides of the cultural gulf of a melting pot of economic co-existence, what went wrong?

First, although whites recognized the need for Indians to get into business, they never gave tribal members much credit for any capability of doing so effectively on their own terms. Second, Indians re-enforced this impression through inter- and intra-tribal bickering. They agreed neither on the extent of their culture they were willing to sacrifice, nor at what compensation. Self-seeking whites in government and business took advantage of this through the creation of "government chiefs" and the cultivation of paid lackeys within the legitimate tribal leadership.

Third, low-level officials and field agents had the power significantly to modify policy in practice. They were often ignorant and corrupt.

Fourth, any accommodation the Indians might work out with American big business to maintain tribal sovereignty was threatened by the political power of the settler class, whose interest was served by nothing less than elimination of Indian ownership or control of all arable land.

There was considerable interest among tribal leaders in either holding stock in railroad companies running through their domain or in building and operating these railroads themselves.

In 1870 the Choctaw Council chartered two railways, the Choctaw and Chickasaw Central Railway Company and the Choctaw and Chickasaw Thirty-Fifth Parallel Railway Company. The latter had a capital stock of \$7 million with six Indian directors, including the principal chiefs of the Choctaw and Chickasaw tribes. The president of the railroad was a white man, as were the general agent and chief attorney.¹⁶

The Cherokees also chartered a railroad in 1870. The tribe even granted the U.S. Congress the right to organize and regulate the company, so long as it was owned by Cherokee citizens. Cherokee leaders stated that they wanted to build their own railroad "for reasons above all pecuniary consideration." Their strategy was to recognize American rights of transit and business development without opening their country to "capitalists and strangers, who have no sympathy for Indians or their peculiarities." Controlling their own railroad, the Cherokees wrote, would allow Indians to make progress toward "Christian Civilization," including an understanding of business, while maintaining something of their Indian culture and tribal rights.¹⁷

A third major native railroad proposal came from the Creeks. The Creeks argued that their existence "which is as dear to them as it is to the people of

the United States" depended on their controlling the transit arrangements through their territory by organizing their own company.¹⁸

Washington was unsympathetic to these proposals. Interestingly the Cherokee railroad was nixed by Ely S. Parker, the first Native American Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Parker wrote that railroads could only be built by persons "qualified by nature and experience" for business, and that did not include Indians. His other argument against allowing it was that the Indian railroads might succeed in their object of preserving tribal culture by diminishing outside economic pressure. Parker wrote that it was not "good policy to encourage any measures that look to the perpetuation of semi-civilized customs and forms of society, to the detriment of public interest."¹⁹ Parker did not get into his position of influence by being a radical Indian nationalist.

The pattern of suppression by the Indian Office of Indian attempts to organize their own businesses or control outside ones recurred often.

The Five Civilized Tribes built large cattle herds of their own. They also tried to tax and regulate, rather than to resist, cattle grazing by non-Indians. However, the tribal officers appointed to enforce the rules were resisted both by cattlemen and by field and Washington officials. Also, as with railroads, intratribal jealousies and bickering created exploitable rifts. Consequently one cattleman could write in 1885 that "the immense domain -- 136 million acres -- held and occupied by 263 thousand Indians, is proving to be a source of weakness to them, instead of a tower of strength."²⁰

The same was true with oil and gas development. In 1883 the Cherokees passed a law authorizing oil exploration in their reserve. There was a royalty to the tribe of ten cents a barrel and leases were limited to Cherokee citizens, who might associate with outsiders in order to raise capital and get expert advice.²¹ The next year the tribe granted a monopoly franchise to a company of Indians and New York City associates. Both moves were justified on the grounds that, "the greater your progress is, and the more means you have at your command ; the more successful, in the same proportion, will you be in opposing encroachments on your rights."²²

The New York oil partners inquired at the Indian Office in Washington about their deal, only to learn that the federal government was not only not cooperating in aiding Indian enterprises, but was actively discouraging them. The company was unable to attract investors with that kind of news, and the Cherokees repealed the franchise in 1888.²³

When it became obvious that Indians would not be able to provide the demanded business services themselves, economic development looked more ominous for their cultures. In time they found that they were not even able to reap the financial benefit of the business development of tribal lands. Funds generated by sales of lands vacated by the Indians of Kansas and by royalties and fees were not distributed per capita. They were instead deposited in trust funds in Washington and in turn invested "for the benefit of the Indians" in the stock and bonds of American corporations. Sometimes these funds were invested directly, as was the Delaware Fund in the Union Pacific Eastern Division Railroad or the Creek Orphan Fund in the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company. Sometimes Indian money was invested in U.S. and state securities which were in turn pledged in support of corporate issues. The extent of this investment has yet to be quantified, but it was immense.

The Indians complained only at the grossest trust fund abuses. The Chickasaws protested when in 1870 the U.S. Treasury Department tried to tax the interest on the bonds of the Nashville and Chatanooga railroad held in trust

for that tribe, and to debit the Chickasaw Fund for defaults by the railroad company on payments of interest and principal. The Chickasaws reminded on that occasion that they were hardly voluntary investors at risk in the development of American corporations. If "the attempt is made to force the Indian to contribute his pittance to the growth of all this prosperity and power," the Chickasaw delegation wrote, the government should at least be just in assessing the beneficiaries.²⁴ "They take stock in our destruction," the Cherokees claimed, "and in the dishonor of the government."²⁵

More threatening than abuse by a corporate/government cartel was agitation by farmers for allotment of Indian lands, opening of the excess, and complete assimilation of the tribes and their cultures. A political battle took place between railroad interests and settler interests over the disposal of the Osage lands in Kansas. The Osages signed a treaty with the Missouri, Kansas & Texas railroad agreeing to the sale of their Kansas lands at a lesser rate than the government had offered, but in toto and with immediate rather than deferred payment. This treaty was ignored by the government as not being in the Indian interest as perceived by Washington. The land went to the farmers and Washington thereafter perceived it to be in the national interest to give these voting farmers many extensions on their payment schedule to the Indians.²⁶

All in all, Indian experience indicated to them that they would be better off in the hands of the corporation, with which the tribe could at least make deals, than with the "do-good" reformers who planned a "New Indian" to a design determined at a Lake Mohonk religious conference. Experiences with schemes to elevate Indians morally using their own resources --from the 1860s "civilization fund" to the 1880s allotment policy -- were less satisfactory to Indians than ideas that proposed to make them rich. One of the cleverest frauds involving the use of tribal division and corrupt agents to separate Indians from their treaty funds was the construction of a University and townsite at Ottawa, Kansas during the 1870s under the guise of establishing an "Indian University" for the elevation of the poor Ottawas.²⁷

The federal government, always attuned to political considerations and acutely aware that Indians did not vote, proved an unreliable intermediary. "When we do have [an agent]," wrote a Shawnee in 1858, "and go to him for advice about something as apt as any way he will say well I will consult Mr. such an one in reference to your request. So he will hoist himself upon his dignity stilts and leave us. Well the next time we see him and ask about it he will tell us some unmeaning or some kind of excuse. Probably it is now too late. All the Agents we have had for the last 18 years are or have been better judges of Brandy than their duty I think."²⁸ Complaining about the "Indian Ring" that developed as government underlings assumed what one called "patriarchal" and "dictatorial" rule over the tribes, one critic noted: "You speak to them with the voice of Jacob while you give to them the hairy hand of Esau....What morals can you expect from such teachers?"²⁹

Inability to form their own business enterprises or to regulate numerous intruders, and suspicion of those that would be established for them through the intermediary of the U.S. government, led in the 1880s to a remarkable Indian stratagem. Certain tribal leaders, quite on purpose, made leases or gave franchises to powerful U.S. corporations or associations in order to tie the self-interest of favored white businessmen to the continued existence and sovereignty of the tribal governments.

Examples of this in the Mid-Continent region abound. The railroad right-of-way granted by the Choctaws to Jay Gould in 1882 was one. The lease

of the Cherokee Outlet in 1883 to the Cherokee Strip Livestock Association was another. The "blanket lease" of the Osage reserve to Henry Foster and the founders of the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Company was a third. Less public were ranches on the Kiowa-Comanche reserve operated tax-free by the Standard Oil Company.³⁰

There were those at the time and since who claimed such franchises and leases were a "sell-out" for a pittance by corrupt tribal leaders. But they had distinct advantages to realistic Indian nationalists. First, the favored corporations were more easily regulated by the tribes. Second, those who benefited from these tribal deals formed a powerful lobby of U.S. citizens against the territorial and allotment bills that were brought before Congress at every session. Third, the leases and privileges provided the tribes with income, while bringing a minimum number of "strangers" into their realm and causing minimum disruption of their courts and legislatures. There is every reason to believe that the policy of granting such franchises delayed the creation of the state of Oklahoma and extended tribal control there for twenty years.

Cherokee chief Dennis Bushyhead is an example of an Indian leader who pursued the leasing strategy purposefully and as a tribal patriot. Bushyhead thought that to be intransigent in opposing American business and industry was to lose the battle quickly. If the Indians held back "progress," Congress would either take decisions on their economic future entirely away from them, or overwhelm them with more proposals than they could handle. Bushyhead instead granted specific rights to specific companies and then worked to enforce the details and to collect the revenue. In that, he thought the tribe was acting just as a state government did, or should. "Gigantic corporations and federations of corporations," he told his National Council in 1881, "have spread out and menaced the power of great states and even make their powers felt in Congress, and their menaces are not without significance to the Cherokee Nation."³¹ There was no reason for Indians to cry and collapse at this. "Everything depends upon the way they [the corporations] are regarded and treated, whether their great power is used for or against -- to aid or to injure."³²

Bushyhead was no full-blood. Intermarriage in his family began in 1760 with the British officer from whom he took his name. Nor was he a tribal innocent. He had attended Princeton and participated in the California gold rush. He wore a suit and not a blanket. But he was a Cherokee, a tribal member, as were his ancestors for generations. Given the nature of "Indianness" circa 1885, it would be straining to define him or his ideas away.³³

This last Indian strategy in accommodating to America through its business also failed. The break with the past then became nearly complete, and the tragedy in trying to recreate in the 20th century a culture and economic life that was specifically Indian was foreordained.

Did it have to be that way?

Usually the answer to that question is debated between romanticists, who believe Indians should be or should have been left alone in some sort of protected "wilderness area" as historical exhibits, and ethnocentric practitioners of "realpolitik" who dismiss such thinking as woolly-headed nostalgia.

The original vision, however, was of a market compromise, employing a competitive enterprise system which had demonstrated in the past great capability in accommodating diversity, individual and cultural, and in recognizing interests. Contracts, such as Indians made directly with outside corporations through the 19th century, could be either for the purpose of providing a service and collecting a royalty, aiding Indians to establish their own enterprises, or

both. Such contracts were for a term, were negotiated between parties much more equal in what they could get and give economically than were the Indians and the federal government on a political basis, and could be renegotiated if they proved unsatisfactory. Many complex things, such as language, have evolved through this sort of interplay of needs as expressed by interest and with neither a formal plan nor a committee of planners.

Businessmen favored this course. "If these Indians are citizens of the United States," wrote an oil district paper in Pennsylvania, "they should be treated as such. It is incompatible with the principles of a free government to look upon them as incompetents and defectives, and treat every man who desired to develop their oil and gas properties as a robber and a scoundrel."³⁴ They criticized government intervention in business dealings. "Now do you imagine you can legislate forethought into a man?....," said one operator at a congressional hearing. "The Indian will have to find his own level....You can't knock him into it....There is only one place he can get it . . . and that is in the school [of] . . . experience and hard knocks . . . against the edges and corners and things in this world."³⁵

The U.S. government, however, felt that it was its duty to intervene in that process and to impose an "improved" plan upon the seeming chaos of intercultural capitalism. In its role as "protector," it dispatched "disinterested" agents who were neither businessmen nor Indians, and stood to gain or lose nothing but power from the economic and political transactions in Indian Country.

Ironically, government took great pride in this, and in reliance on morality, good faith and scientific understanding to regulate the future. The result, however, was, as Choctaw savant Peter Pitchlynn once put it, a combination of "crooked means and seemingly just legislation," which allowed responsibility to dissipate to the point of disappearance.³⁶

A market meeting of the two cultures would have been filled with mistakes and inefficiencies, injustices and even tragedies. Yet Indians did move to solve intratribal differences through Indian-Territory wide tribal meetings and conferences in the 1870s. They did form their own corporations. They did make their own deals. Yet the interaction between American business and American Indians was never free of the intruding presence of a third party with a master plan -- several of them in sequence and in tandem. In market-based, wealth-creating economics, both sides sometimes win. In political situations, someone always loses.

Possibly the likes of Peter Pitchlynn and Dennis Bushyhead, maybe the interplay of interest and the evolution of negotiating skill, could have done no better with the "Indian Question" than the methods that are now our history.

But they could hardly have done any worse.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON RESERVATIONS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

David J. Vinje
Department of Economics
Pacific Lutheran University

Economic development has been an objective for Indian reservations since their inception. The strategy to be used in achieving the objective, however, has varied. Under the General Allotment Act of 1887, the strategy consisted of simply having Indians duplicate the white man's approach as used in the Western United States. The assumption being that once the reservation had been parceled out, individual Indians would enthusiastically and successfully turn to small scale commercial ranching and farming activities.¹ In this way, the Indian "problem" would be resolved.

The Snyder Act of 1921 formally charged the newly established Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) as the agency to oversee the process of economic and social development on Indian reservations. The Bureau, under Commissioner John Collier, appeared to recognize the value of tribal traditions and customs. The Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 established the concept of tribal government for the reservations. The governments enacted under this law were clearly patterned on the white man's model. Collier did, however, recognize that communal enterprises operating under tribal authorization represented an acceptable alternative to the individualistic, private enterprise model.² The economic development strategy during the period was still based on a movement into commercial activities.

Collier, for example, had no qualms in forcing the Navajo Nation to sell off livestock as a counter to the overgrazing that was taking place on the reservation in the 1930s. The raising of sheep and goats constituted a subsistence agricultural base that was the backbone of the Navajo Tribe. The newly formed tribal government of the Navajo's was unwilling to enforce a change of the magnitude specified by Collier given the economic hardships in existence at that time for many tribal members. In response, the Bureau put itself in charge and forced the sale of approximately one-fourth of the Navajo's livestock. The BIA maintained that the sale of the livestock would stop the overgrazing and, at the same time, speed the development of a more commercial approach to livestock production by encouraging the larger producers to upgrade the quality of their sheep and goats. The families displaced by the sale of their livestock were expected to find non-agricultural jobs in federal construction projects.³

The example just cited illustrates two key points regarding pre-war economic development on Indian reservations. First and foremost, the economic relationship of the Indian reservations to the federal government was clearly one of dependency. The federal government had the ultimate decision-making power with respect to economic development strategies as practiced by tribal authorities on U. S. Indian reservations. Second, the objective of self-sufficiency was not achieved by the commercial agricultural and grazing activities practiced in the pre-WWII period. The Navajo, for example, simply did not have a geographic base adequate to achieve self-sufficiency by relying on agricultural and grazing activities. This fact did not have a lot to do with whether the tribal members were practicing subsistence or commercial agricultural and grazing activities. The land base, on the largest U.S. Indian

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W
Blackfeet	33.7	10576	43.7	49.9	96.1	21.1	72.2	30.9	19.9	22.8	15.8	58.5	6.4	21.9	11.3	7.9	12.2	0.8	1.9	1.8	35.7	47.3
Colville	21.4	13501	42.5	56.2	99.0	13.4	79.7	32.6	32.7	18.6	6.1	57.4	9.4	24.2	15.9	7.4	9.4	3.6	3.0	2.3	22.4	35.1
Crow	30.4	12239	45.0	52.1	94.4	37.7	70.1	20.2	30.3	25.3	16.8	72.4	1.5	34.7	9.4	3.1	6.8	4.0	2.1	2.0	36.2	43.4
E. Cherokee	32.7	9774	41.0	43.2	99.1	12.0	73.7	49.8	15.4	23.0	6.5	44.9	24.2	17.3	2.2	7.0	7.2	0.2	3.4	0.7	37.8	48.9
Flathead	27.7	11395	42.2	57.0	98.8	12.4	75.1	32.9	25.4	23.3	4.9	53.6	13.4	21.7	14.7	9.3	7.2	0.6	3.7	1.7	27.7	42.4
Ft. Apache	47.6	9273	47.8	34.1	87.4	48.1	64.1	40.1	30.2	20.3	8.9	59.4	17.4	20.7	8.2	7.2	9.9		1.5	1.4	33.8	43.9
Ft. Peck	38.4	10864	46.6	51.1	98.6	24.8	75.7	35.4	26.2	15.9	13.5	55.6	11.3	23.5	7.9	6.3	10.7	2.9	2.9	1.6	33.0	43.8
Gila River	50.7	7955	44.3	38.3	88.8	41.8	61.5	42.3	28.3	17.7	9.1	55.1	10.7	23.8	14.5	4.1	7.3	0.2	2.9	1.6	34.8	43.4
Hopi	50.9	8197	41.6	41.7	41.9	58.8	54.7	22.7	30.5	28.5	7.5	66.5	12.5	25.3	4.0	9.2	6.8	0.9	3.4	1.0	36.8	50.4
Osage	13.9	16095	38.1	65.9	99.7	5.2	65.9	57.3	8.1	7.0	14.4	29.5	14.1	12.8	5.7	14.8	8.7	11.4	5.3	3.8	23.4	47.3
Laguna Pueblo	14.4	16755	40.8	62.0	97.2	23.6	70.3	57.2	23.2	11.8	4.5	39.5	1.8	14.7	2.2	1.8	8.2	41.1	5.6	0.9	23.9	32.2
Choctaw	36.9	10535	49.0	34.1	96.2	39.5	68.5	35.1	35.1	20.1	7.8	63.0	22.9	24.2	7.4	2.6	5.1	0.2	2.2	1.3	34.1	40.2
Navajo	50.5	8397	48.3	34.1	49.4	65.0	58.3	37.2	23.6	22.2	12.2	58.0	7.5	18.0	3.7	7.1	8.9	7.3	8.4	1.1	38.1	54.7
N. Cheyenne	43.0	9699	49.8	52.0	97.3	28.8	66.8	32.2	37.5	17.3	8.1	62.9	5.1	21.5	7.8	2.9	11.2	2.7	5.4	1.5	41.6	51.4
Papago	56.2	7003	42.9	35.0	58.8	48.7	58.6	15.2	42.4	24.5	12.6	79.5	5.4	38.7	5.7	2.1	8.1	2.1	1.3	0.7	35.8	39.9
Pine Ridge	54.7	7942	49.5	44.8	75.2	49.3	61.8	19.1	42.3	24.9	7.7	74.9	6.7	27.9	6.7	3.4	4.7	0.1	2.9	1.8	45.9	54.0
Red Lake	39.5	10025	48.5	43.4	93.0	31.0	63.2	15.8	20.9	34.7	23.2	78.8	11.6	30.1	5.5	1.0	8.2		2.4	1.4	39.6	44.4
Rosebud	47.7	8868	49.2	50.2	93.1	28.5	65.0	22.8	29.0	25.3	14.2	68.5	2.0	27.3	9.2	6.8	5.2		3.5	2.8	43.2	56.3
San Carlos	53.6	7986	46.8	37.1	77.8	57.5	59.1	33.6	35.7	17.2	12.5	65.4	3.6	28.4	10.3	5.6	8.2	9.7	1.7	1.4	31.1	39.8
Standing Rock	51.3	8107	48.6	50.8	84.9	36.5	65.8	14.1	39.4	30.2	8.4	78.0	2.6	34.9	10.6	3.1	6.1		3.2	1.3	38.2	45.8
Turtle Mt.	44.1	8832	48.3	38.8	88.3	25.0	64.8	32.7	18.9	25.4	19.5	63.8	9.7	19.8	2.9	8.3	12.4	0.2	4.4	2.2	42.2	57.1
Wind River	36.0	10816	45.8	47.1	93.1	35.1	68.2	36.6	23.8	18.0	13.9	55.7	4.5	22.6	9.9	5.6	11.3	8.0	3.6	2.6	31.9	43.7
Yakima	34.2	11324	44.7	51.3	99.1	23.8	70.1	32.7	38.8	12.9	6.7	58.4	11.0	25.7	16.8	8.0	7.4		4.8	0.8	25.5	39.1
Zuni Pueblo	44.6	10354	47.0	38.3	94.5	41.3	79.7	12.8	19.4	13.3	10.9	43.6	40.7	15.7	6.5	3.1	5.5	0.3	1.9	1.4	25.2	31.6

LEGEND

A	Twenty-four most heavily populated reservations, 1980 (2750+ population)	M	Total government workers, columns J, K, L.
B	Percentage of families below poverty level., household and/or spouse Indian	TOTAL	CIVILIANS WORKING IN 1980 BY SECTOR (percentage terms)
C	Median family income, householder or spouse Indian (\$).	N	Manufacturing
D	Percentage of Indian population under 18.	O	Public administration.
E	Percentage completing high school, 25 years of age plus.	P	Agriculture
F	Percentage of housing with piped-in water.	Q	Wholesale and retail trade
G	Percentage of housing with 1.01 person per room or more.	R	Construction
H	Labor force participation rate, 16 years of age plus.	S	Mining
TOTAL	CIVILIANS WORKING IN 1980 BY EMPLOYER (percentage terms)	T	Transportation, communication and public utilities.
I	Private wage & salary workers.	U	Financial, insurance and real estate
J	Tribal government workers	V	Services (professional & personal)
K	Federal government workers	W	Total services = columns Q, T, U, V
L	State or local government workers		

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980 Subject Report: American Indians (Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1986)

reservation, was simply too small for the population. This is as true today as it was in the 1930s.

Post World War II Period

In the post-WWII period, a number of different economic development strategies have been employed on U.S. Indian reservations. The diversity may reflect, in part, the increased voice that tribal governments have had in the 1970s and 1980s in selecting an economic development strategy. The economic dependency relationship, however, still exists. Economic self-sufficiency is also as distant a goal today as it was in the pre-WWII period.

Robert McLaughlin of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation maintains that in the 1970s more than 90% of the total income at Standing Rock had either direct or indirect federal origins. He states that this was not an exception. His analysis shows that, for all reservations, 40-97% of total reservation income involves federal transfer payments.⁴ Census data on employment appears to support McLaughlin's analysis at least with respect to the employment impact of federal dollars. In the 1980 Census, employees of the tribal, federal, state and local governments constituted from 29.5% of all workers for the Osage Reservation to 79.5% for the Papago Reservation. Taking the twenty-four most heavily populated reservations reporting in 1980, twenty of them had 50% or more of their civilian employment in governmental work. The majority of tribal government activity is associated with administering programs financed by the federal government. It appears appropriate, therefore, to include tribal employees as part of the dependency effect. Excluding tribal employees still results in a majority of these reservations having over 30% of their work force in federal, state and local employment. By comparison, only five of the twenty-four reservations have 30% or more of their labor force in private wage and salary employment.⁵

Dependency is an economic fact on today's reservation. This does not have to mean an absence of independent decision-making. It is simply a reality that has to be acknowledged. It is a reality that a good number of Third World countries have to acknowledge. A copper exporting country such as Peru has to recognize its dependence on the world price of copper and the multinational companies that operate in the world market for copper. That does not stop Peru from making its own decision on the percentage of its export earnings it will devote to paying off its external debt to the world's commercial banks. U.S. farmers today are receiving approximately 40-45% of their income from farm subsidy programs operated by the federal government. This does not mean that farmers have lost all independence to the government. They still have the ability to exert an influence as to future government farm programs. Last, but by no means least, the US, as an economy, is currently the largest debtor nation in the world. We have in a period of two years transferred ourselves from a creditor nation to a nation dependent on capitol inflows if we are to retain our current living standard. The US still, however, feels free to voice strong opinions regarding the domestic economic and political programs operating in Japan, West Germany and elsewhere.

The reality of dependence may set constraints on the decision-making process. This is the case for Indian reservations as it is for the other examples cited above. Recently, the state of Nebraska was, in effect, held for blackmail by a corporation. The corporation in question insisted that either it would

receive a specific tax exemption from the state's sales and income tax or it would move its corporate headquarters elsewhere. There is no doubt the state's legislature wanted to tell the corporation involved that the state, not a single corporation, would decide what is a fair tax system. The economic reality of today's rural economy is such that the state capitulated rather than face the loss of some 400 jobs.⁶ There is no doubt many reservations are in a similar position given the current lack of activity in the natural resource sector, and the trend in federal grant programs. They face a reality that does place constraints on the economic development process. Independence in decision-making still exists, but it often may appear to be little more than the ability to say no.

Current pessimism must be kept in perspective. The post-WWII period has witnessed substantial changes in the tribe's role in the economic development process. The federal government, through the BIA, does have an approval/disapproval function in the strategy selection process given its control over the purse strings. But, the 1960s through the 1980s have seen a greater BIA willingness to accommodate tribal pressures for a diversity of economic development approaches.

Reservation economic development has as its objective increasing the economic well-being of the reservations population. Essentially, the strategies for achieving the objective involve keying on a specific economic sector in anticipation that success in the key sector will lead the reservation economy into a more self-sustaining and self-reliant economic growth process. The strategies employed in the post-WWII period, can be broadly classified as: 1) primary products led export strategy; 2) manufacturing led export strategy; 3) import substitution strategy.

Export Strategy: Primary Products

The primary product, or traditional, export-led strategy envisions the sale of natural resource based products to the non-reservation community as the lead sector in the development process. Indian reservations are generally characterized by a relatively small population with very limited income. The selection of a viable economic development strategy rests with the identification of what is perceived as the reservation's economic comparative advantage. Many of the reservations do encompass significant endowments of natural resources. As stated earlier, in the pre-WWII period, the natural resource base was orientated towards the development of commercial agricultural and grazing activities. The post-WWII period saw the emphasis turn to oil, natural gas, mineral, timber and fisheries resources.

In the period 1957-66, average tribal revenue from the sale of timber amounted to \$12.8 million per year. Nearly all of this income was earned by approximately twenty reservations ranging from the Colville Reservation of Washington to the Mescalero Apache Reservation of New Mexico. During the same period, 1957-66, the average annual tribal revenue from the sale of petroleum and natural gas was \$41.2 million. The sale of mineral resources, such as uranium and coal, brought in an additional \$2.1 million.⁷

The real boom in natural resource development came to the reservations in the 1970s. Existing coal, oil and natural gas operations were expanded during this period and new ones established. The rising demand for oil and coal also brought increased investment capital to the reservations in the form of major corporations negotiating with the tribes for the establishment of electrical

generating facilities and coal gasification plants. By 1975, the Navajo Reservation had four different corporations operating coal mines and electrical generating plants on the reservation.⁸ The Navajo's, by 1985, had granted 198 oil and gas leases. Reservations in Montana, Wyoming and Oklahoma were undergoing a similar experience during this period. As of 1982, reservation income from oil, gas and coal was \$396.3 million per year with \$368 million from oil and gas alone. The 1982 figure represented close to a ninefold increase from the 1957-66 average annual revenue flow.⁹ The Navajo in the 1970s expected natural resource development to represent the backbone of their economic development process. In financing new enterprises, the Navajo's anticipated private capital for the extractive industries in an amount double that put up by the Tribe itself.

But, the 1980s witnessed the other side of a natural resource based development strategy. The recession of 1981-83 resulted in a massive drop in world price and production for coal, oil and uranium. The "bust" phase of the cycle extended to the timber sector as well. The Colville Tribe's revenue from timber sales dropped from approximately \$25 million in the late 1970s and early 1980s to approximately \$5 million by 1986.¹⁰ In addition, the capital intensive nature of resource based activity means that the number of jobs created in the extractive industries themselves are relatively small compared to the investment required. The Osage Reservation and the Laguna Pueblo were the only two of the largest twenty-four reservations to have over 10% of their labor force employed in mining or related activity as of 1980. The Laguna Pueblo was by far the largest with 41.1% employed. The Crow, Navajo, Wind River and Colville Reservations, while relying heavily on natural resource activity, had only 4-8% of their labor force directly employed in this sector. Agriculture, while never experiencing the boom associated with mining and oil production, is often able to employ a higher percentage of the labor force. The Crow Reservation had over twice as many of its paid workers in agriculture as in the extractive sector in 1980. The Wind River and Osage Reservations had approximately an equal number in agriculture as in mining and oil production.¹¹

In conclusion, the traditional export led model with its stress on natural resource based activity has some real difficulties to contend with. Its cyclical nature makes it unreliable. Its capital intensity results in it generating few jobs. The tribes, however, have not given up on the model. The reservations have approximately 50% of the country's privately owned uranium and 30% of the West's low-sulphur strippable coal reserves. They also have approximately 4% of all oil and natural gas reserves.

The Indian tribes, in the 1970s, joined together to form the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) as a vehicle for helping individual tribal governments increase their royalties from natural resource activities. Most tribes, following the Crow Indian court case, have been able to substantially increase their royalty income by renegotiating existing coal and oil leases. Even with the slump in production and prices, the Navajo's, for example, have been able to increase their total royalty income by 20.6% between 1983 and 1985.¹² The Indian tribes have been renegotiating the mineral and oil leases themselves with the BIA granting approval after the renegotiation process. The tribes today, given a decade of experience, seem able to successfully handle the large multinational mining and oil companies in the negotiation process. The 1985 court decision upholding the Navajo Tribe's authority to level taxes should increase potential tribal income from natural resource based activities as well. The increased royalty income, combined with potential tax revenues, should

expand the ability of tribal governments to use the extractive industries as an export base to generate support for reservation-wide economic development programs.

Export Strategy: Manufactured Products

Indian reservations, while limited in market size, often possess surplus labor. Early in the 1960s, the BIA, in combination with the Economic Development Administration and the Department of Labor, started a major thrust towards expansion of manufacturing activity on the reservations. Tribal officials were encouraged to work with the Department of Labor in the training of a labor force suitable for manufacturing employment. The BIA, EDA and tribal governments also worked together in locating and financially underwriting suitable labor-intensive manufacturing firms for reservation sites.

The strategy did succeed in the establishment of manufacturing firms on the reservations. The firms were predominantly involved in the production of products to be sold off-reservation. The examples are numerous and varied. Rosebud Electronics on the Rosebud Reservation of South Dakota produced electronic cable systems for use in IBM computers. The William Langer plant on the Turtle Mountain Reservation of North Dakota produced jewel bearings for use in watches. The Wright-McGill company produced Eagle Claw Fishing Equipment on the Pine Ridge Reservation of South Dakota, while on the Navajo Reservation, Fairchild established a facility for production of silicon-based transistors and semi-conductors. In the West, the Yakima Tribe of Washington established the White Swan furniture plant.¹³

There were six plants operating on reservations, as of 1960, employing approximately 525 Indians. By 1968, the number of plants was 114 and the employment had increased to 4,112 Indians with a non-Indian employment somewhat higher at 4,775. While impressive, it is still possible to make the statement that the growth in manufacturing firms and employment did not constitute a successful economic development strategy. Success involves a strategy being able to lead the rest of the reservations' economy into a self-sustaining growth process. This did not happen. The Navajo reservation, for example, after working for eight years attracting manufacturing firms to the reservation had approximately a thousand Navajo's employed in these firms. But, for that one year, 1968, the growth in the Navajo's labor force was approximately three thousand individuals. The recruitment of firms was expensive as well. It has been estimated that the Navajo Tribe earned a one percent rate of return on the fixed investment required to attract the Fairchild plant to the reservation, a firm that no longer operates on the reservation.¹⁴

Reservation employment in manufacturing firms constituted, by 1968, only three percent of the labor force available.¹⁵ If one uses the labor force employed, instead of that available, the employment in manufacturing had, by 1970, reached a median of 12.2% for the twenty-four largest reservations. In 1980, the median employment in manufacturing had fallen to 9.5%.¹⁶ Overall, the manufacturing firms have not been able to keep up with population growth on the reservations. The turnover in plants has also been high. Many of the firms attracted to the reservations were not able to cope with their remote location relative to the markets they were selling in. Additionally, the firms were often poorly managed and in financial trouble before coming to the reservation. It

appears some were drawn only by the federal assistance available from a reservation location. There have, of course, been some notable successes. The Eastern Cherokee of North Carolina had, by 1980, 24.2% of its labor force in manufacturing, while the Choctaw Reservation of Mississippi had 22.9%. Many of the more successful reservation firms have either been tribally operated and/or operating under a federal contract from the Defense Department or some other federal agency. One of the most discouraging characteristics of reservation manufacturing employment was documented by Murray.¹⁷ In a study done for the BIA, he found that 31 of the 48 families employed by a reservation manufacturing firm operating in the 1960-65 period, on the Pine Ridge Reservation, were not able to earn any income sufficient to lift them out of the official poverty range.

The BIA and many tribal governments still view the development of manufacturing activity as at least a partial strategy for economic development. As recently as 1986, the Navajo Tribe in its Overall Economic Development Plan cited promotion of industrial and manufacturing activity as a key economic development strategy. The economic status of most reservations is such that tribal officials have to promote every possible type of economic development activity. The limited capital resources available to the tribes requires, however, that priorities be established in deciding how best to increase the rate of economic growth for a specific reservation. Past experience would seem to make one hesitant regarding a strategy stressing manufacturing activity. The future for this particular strategy is also not very bright. Today's global economy means that reservations are competing with Third World countries in trying to attract labor-intensive manufacturing operations. Peter MacDonald of the Navajo Tribe was recently quoted as saying the Navajo Reservation is going to compete with countries such as Taiwan in promoting private sector industrial production of components to be used in American products. He openly cited the potential for huge profits for entrepreneurs locating on the Navajo Reservation.¹⁸ Pat McLaughlin of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation has stated that, in order to effectively compete in promoting non-government economic activity, the tribe might stop trying to promote increased federal transfer payments since the income received in this form often exceeds that which can be earned with wages from private enterprise jobs.¹⁹

The objective of economic development is that of increasing the economic well-being of the population involved. Do Indian tribes really want to promote economic activity that doesn't appear to meet existing wage levels? Even in pursuit of less federal dependency, is such an approach justified? The Third World countries represent a challenge for low wage manufacturing activity that isn't going to improve in the foreseeable future. In a recent advertisement to promote investment, the Sri Lanka Economic Development Authority ran a headline story welcoming "Robber Barons." The ad stated that "Robber Barons" were making a pile in Sri Lanka's investment zone. It went on to state that unskilled workers made \$26 a month in Sri Lanka's capitol city, while skilled labor was available for \$45 a month.²⁰ It is hard to see how any reservation employee is going to be better off making \$2.25 a day as a skilled worker.

Import Substitution Strategy

Virtually all reservations, in the period since the late 1960s, have been promoting a type of import substitution model. Import substitution has been

widely used by Third World countries in the post-WWII period. Further back in time, it was used by the U.S., West Germany and Japan. The strategy incorporated in the model involves the rapid build-up of a country's manufacturing sector through the substitution of domestically produced products for what previously had been imported products. The strategy is activated by the installation of high tariff barriers on imported products creating a captive market for domestic producers. The Third World countries have viewed the creation of a domestic manufacturing sector as a means of generating a more rapid growth in income and employment, as well as a means of reducing their traditional dependency on the export of natural resource based products.

Indian reservations do not have a market size adequate to support production of manufactured goods for on-reservation sale alone. The production of manufactured products for sale off-reservation, as has been noted earlier, hasn't been overly successful either. Finally, a reservation doesn't have the legal ability to prevent manufactured products, such as cars and appliances, from being brought onto the reservation. The reservations have, however, come up with a successful variation on the import substitution strategy.

The variation involves maximizing the on-reservation spending stream generated from the reservations inhabitants. Development planners are trying to insure that when a dollar is spent, no matter how earned, it is spent on the reservation. In this way, the reservation gains the direct impact, in jobs and income, that comes from that dollar. The reservation also captures the multiplier or respending process that is associated with consumer's expenditures. A coat, for example, is bought from a store. That sale supports the store in terms of jobs and income. It may, given the mark-up in retailing, create income to the store equal to 20-50 percent of the coats value. In turn, the store's employees and owners are earning salaries and profits enabling them to buy consumer goods as well. If the items they buy, food, clothing, etc., are also sold on the reservation, the respending cycle continues within the boundaries of the reservation.

The reservations may not have a market size adequate to support the production, on-reservation, of major consumer items. Many of them do have an adequate size, given an often times remote location, to support retail outlets. The Navajo's estimate that previously only 10-15% of consumer's expenditures were spent on-reservation. Their goal is to raise the on-reservation multiplier to a figure approaching 1.5, which is the multiplier for the state of New Mexico as a whole.²¹ If successful, for every \$1 spent on the reservation, \$1.50 of income will be generated for the reservations' economy. The strategy does not attempt to isolate the reservation from the outside economy. The tribes are still trying to increase the income earned from outside sources, including the federal government. The strategy tries to insure that once the income is on the reservation it stays there in the form of on-reservation expenditure patterns. In the terminology of regional economics export base theory, this variation on the import substitution model would be viewed as stressing the "residential" activities. The assumption being that the approach may enable the reservation's economy to grow at a rate beyond that dictated by the export or base activities.

There has been, over the last fifteen years, a rapid increase in the number of commercial business establishments on reservations. Reservations as varied as the Zuni Pueblo, Navajo, Colville and Standing Rock Sioux have been involved in the development of shopping centers. In addition to retail outlets, the reservations have also been encouraging the service sector. Services ranging from gas stations to legal offices have been developed on many reservations.

The most recent addition in the service sector is the development of on-reservation banking facilities. The tribe's involvement in these activities varies. The tribe, on some reservations, will build the shopping center and then lease outlets to specific businesses. Joint-ventures between the tribe and the off-reservation business community have also been established. Generally, management and financial assistance are made available to the individuals establishing new business enterprises on the the reservations. The Colville Reservation, for example, uses the concept of an incubator service where consulting services are on-site with the new shopping facility.²²

The availability of support services, as well as the emphasis many tribes are placing on establishing the retail and service sector as a private business sector, has generated increased interest by Indian businessmen and women in becoming operators of commercial outlets. Navajo owned retail and service establishments, as of 1970, numbered 69.²³ By 1985, the number of privately owned Navajo businesses had almost doubled to 132 firms. Surprisingly, the actual percentage of total retail and service firms in Navajo vs. non-Navajo hands did not change appreciably during this period. Navajo held 35% of the total in 1970 and 36% in 1986.²⁴

Employment data reflects the growing emphasis on retail and service sector activity. The 1970 Census, under a broad definition of the retail and service sector (includes financial, retail, transportation, personal and communication), shows the largest twenty-four reservations with an employment ranging from a low of 23.9% for the Yakima Reservation to a high of 52.5% of total employment for the Hopi Reservation. The average for the twenty-four reservations was 42.3%. The 1980 Census shows a low of 31.6% for the Zuni Pueblo, and a high of 57.5% for the Turtle Mountain Reservation. The average, in 1980, for the largest twenty-four reservations was 50.5% of total employment in the retail and service sector.²⁵

The Indian variation of the import substitution model extends beyond an emphasis on retail and service sector activity. Two additional components are common on many reservations. One component is that of expanding the on-reservation economic impact from government funds flowing to the reservation. Tribal governments have been able to increase the reservation's value-added component associated with projects such as housing, health care and education. The BIA, and other government agencies, have turned to tribal officials for administration of government projects. The tribal governments have become more experienced and more knowledgeable regarding project management. The recognition of this, in combination with federal agency personnel cut backs, has encouraged the trend in tribal responsibility for project supervision. One example can be found in the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's effort in creating an improved educational program for their high school students. Tribal members were convinced that a better curriculum and improved classrooms would help reduce the high dropout rate for high school students. In response, the BIA gave the tribe responsibility for the development of a new educational package that included both curriculum changes and the architectural design and construction of a new high school. The project's success may result in the tribe having a consulting role in other reservations BIA funded educational programs.²⁶

The trend in tribal management of federal funded programs increases the job market for highly trained members of the reservation's labor force. In addition to the direct employment effects, it appears that a process of tribal supervision also increases the opportunity for on-reservation firms to successfully bid on contracts for construction, maintenance and remodeling of government

funded facilities. The tribal government can help firms put together their bids as well as lend financial and/or training assistance. On-reservation construction activity has increased from a median of 7.2% of total employment in 1970 to 8.2% in 1980.²⁷ A number of reservations are also exploring the feasibility of using tribal sawmills, woodworking, cement and masonry plants to produce materials for use in reservation housing projects and the construction of other reservation facilities.

The second added component to increased reservation spending is more varied. The Navajo Reservation, for example, is exploring the feasibility of processing the vegetables grown on its large-scale irrigated agricultural project. It anticipates that a freezing or canning operation would increase the on-reservation value-added from the crops being grown. The numerous sawmill operations found on many reservations is another example of the same idea. Instead of exporting the raw material--logs, you export a processed product generating a higher level of reservation jobs and income. Tourism represents a similar opportunity. The more motels, restaurants, gift shops and marinas available for off-reservation tourists, the more reservation jobs and income generated from a given visit to the reservation. This category of increased value-added may be a bit harder to establish since it involves a more direct competition with the off-reservation community.

Assessment

The modified import substitution strategy has been successful on many reservations. The number of business establishments has been rising as has the percentage of the labor force employed in the activities under discussion. Management challenges still exist for many of the operations, but with experience, consulting and financial assistance the challenges should be surmountable. The strategy, however, is not going to bring about an independent, self-sustaining reservation economy. The unemployment rate still remains extremely high on most reservations. Estimates of average unemployment rates in the 40% range are quite common.

The objective of an independent, self-sustaining economy is fine, but a more realistic objective might be encompassed by the "Basis Needs" concept as put forth by the World Bank.²⁸ This concept views the initial objective, in the economic development process, as helping a reservation's population meet its basis needs in terms of housing, education, reduction in poverty levels, health care, etc. Jobs represent one method of helping people meet their basis needs, and it is a method that promises the greatest independence for both the individual and the reservation economy. The lack of jobs, however, does not mean that basis needs cannot be met directly through program activity.

A basic needs approach is quite compatible with an economic development strategy stressing traditional activities. In most cases, traditional activities such as subsistence agriculture and the production of handcrafted jewelry, pottery, etc. are not able to generate an adequate living standard. It is possible, however, that on a number of reservations traditional activities could, when combined with a basis needs approach, provide an acceptable living standard for the population which believes these activities are necessary in retaining a strong sense of cultural values. Traditional activities also represent a development strategy that is often seen as lessening the economic and political dependency in existence on the reservations. Vine Deloria, Jr. and L. Ruffing maintain that a

successful economic development strategy can exist only if it builds on a tribes' cultural traditions.²⁹

The vast majority of Indian economic development plans do not put an emphasis on traditional activities. The omission may reflect a split between elected tribal officials and individuals at a grass-roots level. It also may reflect the realities of obtaining financing for economic development projects. Either from the private sector or the federal government. More commonly, it appears on many reservations a reflection of a belief by tribal officials that new economic activities do not constitute a threat to retention of cultural values. Most reservations, in supporting basic needs activities, see them as a supplement to the economic development strategies discussed earlier, and not as part of a traditional economic development strategy.

Under a basic needs approach, it is possible to cite some success in the economic development process through the 1980 period. Reservation housing has been improving. A visitor to many reservations today would find the housing a distinct contrast to what existed twenty or thirty years ago. Significant housing needs still exist, but, on average, there has been a substantial improvement. The 1970 Census listed the percentage of families living in housing with 1.01 persons or more per room. The Flathead Reservation of Montana had the best record for the period with 22.9%. The Zuni Pueblo, by contrast, had 70.5% of its families in this category. The twenty-four largest reservations had a median of 57.6% of families with 1.01 persons or more per room. The best record in 1980 was the Osage Reservation with a percentage of 5.2. The Laguna Pueblo had the highest figure with 70.3%. But, the median for all twenty-four reservations had dropped to 33.1% of the families with 1.01 persons or more per room.³⁰

The existence of piped-in water is another method of judging housing quality. Improvement has been made in this category as well. The 1970 median was 74.2%, while the 1980 Census shows a median of 94.0% for housing on the twenty-four most populated reservations. The percentage of adults (25 years +) having completed high school has also been improving. The median for 1970 was 23.3%. The 1980 Census shows a median for the twenty-four largest reservations of 45.0%, or almost double the 1970 figure.

Median family income has been improving on most reservations. The 1970 data shows a median family income of \$4,300. The 1980 Census has a median of \$9,900 or more than a doubling of family income in the decade of the 1970s. Of course, inflation was also very high during this period. The Urban Consumer Price Index approximately doubled during the decade of the 1970s as well. The data would still seem to suggest some increase in real family income. A more important set of data, from a basic needs perspective, is found in the data on the incidence of poverty during this period. Using the federal guidelines, the 1970 median for the percentage of families below a poverty level of income (\$3,743) was 53.0. The Laguna Pueblo had the lowest figures with 24.4% of its families experiencing a poverty level of income while the Papago Reservation had 78.1% of its families in this category. The 1980 data shows the twenty-four most populated reservations with a median for the percentage of families below a poverty level of income (\$7,412) of 41.2. The figure is excessively high for any U.S. population group or region. But, it is a figure that is at least better than it was in 1970. In 1980, the Laguna Pueblo and the Osage Reservation had the best record with 14.4% and 13.9% of their families below a poverty level. The Papago were still the poorest with 56.2% of their families below a poverty level of income.

Living conditions since 1980 are harder to assess. Standardized data is not available, and there have been some significant changes in the last seven years. In general, it may be safe to assume that improvement in meeting basic needs continued for most reservations covered by the study. But, it is clear some reservations are not keeping up. The reservation population is young, with approximately 45% of the total population under 18 years of age, creating housing, education and job pressures for the reservations. At the same time, some reservations lost an important segment of their economic base following the downturn in the natural resource markets. Oil, coal, natural gas, uranium and timber resources are still not providing the jobs and income of a decade ago. The Laguna Pueblo, cited above as having one of the the highest percentages of labor force in mining, and one of the lowest percentages of families below the poverty level, lost its uranium operation in 1981 with the departure of the Anaconda Company. The Colville Reservation is estimating a poverty level at the present time of 30.4% due to the drop in their timber sales.³¹ The 1980 figure for the Colville Reservation was 21.4%.

The Reagan administration has also been systematically attacking federal spending programs of importance to the Indian tribes. Dependency on federal program spending is a fact as was cited earlier in the paper. The Navajo Tribe has been quite aggressive in renegotiating oil, coal and gas leases. They also have been rapidly expanding their taxes on reservation business firms. They still, however, were able to finance only 37.7% of their tribal operating budget. The remaining revenue had to come from the outside in the form of federal monies. In addition, the tribe's operating budget only partially covers many basic needs programs such as health care and education.³²

Comparing the 1986 BIA budget with the 1982 budget shows a loss of approximately \$91 million in program spending, an amount equal to \$258 per capita for the total reservation population. In percentage terms, the budget drop, over the four year period, was 6.4%. The Consumer Price Index during this period went up by 12.7%. Thus, for the BIA's budget to have remained constant, in real spendable dollars, would have required a 12.7% increase during the period 1982-86. Instead, the budget dropped by 6.4%. Declines occurred in other reservation programs as well. Federal spending on Indian education dropped by 17.6% during the period in question, while the Department of Labor's Native American program dropped by 12.1%. The data on federal housing does not break-out Indian housing as a separate program. Overall, the Housing and Urban Development's total spending on low income and public housing dropped by 25.2%. It seems realistic to assume the Indian housing programs experienced a proportionate decline. The only federal program to show an increase was the Department of Health and Human Services' spending on Indian health programs. These programs increased by 29.55 during the 1982-86 period.³³

The Reagan administration has also been seeking changes in the administration of Indian programs. Since 1983, economic development programs have had to find 75% of their financing from non-federal sources. The Presidential Commission on Indian Reservation Economics, in its 1984 report, called for the virtual abolition of the BIA, and the transfer of business functions from tribal governments to private interests. A statement that some have interpreted as a new form of the 1950s "Termination" policy.³⁴

The reality of the present period might best be summarized in the current economic planning for the Northern Cheyenne Reservation of Montana. The Northern Cheyenne fought hard in the 1970s to recapture reservation coal leases that had been given out by the BIA. The Tribe also resisted the siting of a

coal-fired electrical generating plant on the reservation because of concerns regarding its compatibility with the cultural and environmental qualities existing on the tribe's homeland. The tribe undertook legal challenges to the coal companies operating around the Northern Cheyenne's boundary for the purpose of obtaining economic benefits, in the form of jobs and direct payments, equal to the environmental losses the reservation was suffering from off-reservation coal development. The tribe won. The tribe also challenged the state of Montana and the Bureau of Land Management claiming that the tribe should receive a share of the federal royalty income being paid to the state to cover local impact costs associated with coal development on federal lands. Again, the tribe won. In summary, the Northern Cheyenne were very quick to stand-up to the coal companies, the federal government and the state of Montana in resisting coal development on the reservation, and in insuring the tribe would have say in how coal development took place even outside the reservation's boundary.

The Northern Cheyenne Reservation, as of 1987, is struggling economically. The payments from oil and gas exploration, and the payments from coal lease cancellations are exhausted. Federal funds from the BIA programs are declining. The reservation is small with a limited economic base. Timber sales and grazing fees are not large enough to generate a great deal in the way of jobs and income. The retail and service sector, while growing, is also not large enough to make a significant difference.

How has the Northern Cheyenne Tribe responded to their economic problems? This is a tribe that has been extremely independent in its decision-making, and concerned about the cultural and environmental impacts associated with development projects. The Northern Cheyenne, today, are actively seeking participation with coal companies in the development of their coal resources. They are hoping to become partners in a neighboring off-reservation coal mining project. They also are seeking development, on-reservation, of an electrical generating plant to utilize this coal as well as their own coal resources. The feasibility study for the project cites numerous benefits available to coal companies from working with the tribe. Benefits such as: the tribe's substantial reserved water rights being available; the project being immune from federal and state environmental regulations and taxes; the company involved in the project being immune from outsider lawsuits given the tribe's sovereign status; and, the project's labor force being non-union and thus relatively cheap.³⁵

I'm sure many tribal members are not at all pleased with this particular economic development strategy. But, for the Northern Cheyenne, this is simply the economic reality they have to contend with. What choices or alternatives do they have? It's possible, given the natural resource market currently in existence, that even this project isn't that feasible.

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OLD AND NEW VIEWS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDIAN COUNTRY

C. Matthew Snipp*
Department of Sociology
University of Maryland-College Park

The two papers by Professors Miner and Vinje provide a remarkable perspective on American Indian economic development, especially in relation to understanding economic dependency among Indian people. These two papers are remarkable insofar as they cover two very different eras in Indian policy. Miner's paper deals with the period in which the extinction of American Indians was a foregone conclusion, with reformers hastening to "civilize" the Indians and bring them into the American melting pot. Vinje's essay deals with economic development in the wake of recent calls for Indian self-determination, and the re-assertion of tribal sovereignty. These papers are remarkable because of their differing views of the role of outside business interests in Indian country: Miner has a benign perspective of American business while Vinje is less sanguine. Finally, these papers are remarkable in terms of their scope. Miner closely scrutinizes the business dealings of tribes in what is now Kansas and eastern Oklahoma while Vinje takes a broader, though somewhat less detailed view of Indian country.

JAY GOULD FOR COMMISSIONER OF INDIAN AFFAIRS?

Professor Miner has written a provocative paper about the relationship between American business interests and American Indians in the late 19th century. For those interested in such matters, I would highly recommend his book: The Corporation and the Indian (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1976). As Professor Miner notes, "certain surprising 'truths' emerge" in his essay. Whether the arguments he puts forward can be accepted as self-evident "truths" remains open to discussion but without doubt, they are surprising and more so in their implications.

In my comments on Professor Miner's paper, I will focus on his interpretation of the historical record, and the implications of this interpretation. Although not an expert on the subject, I am familiar with the history of late nineteenth century Oklahoma, and Professor Miner's accounting of the historical record cannot be faulted for its accuracy or completeness; in fact, it is thorough and well-documented. On the other hand, his analysis of the meaning of this information is debatable on a number of grounds.

One way of thinking about Professor Miner's paper is that it is an effort to explain why, despite the presence of vast resources, economic development in Indian country has not taken place. Appropriately enough, he focuses on attempts to develop the economic resources of the Oklahoma Indian territory in the late 19th century. The history that he recounts suggests that this area could have had a number of large development projects. Yet, for a number of reasons, these projects never reached fruition, leaving the economy of this region to stagnate.

To begin with our agreements, I think Professor Miner has made an important contribution in bringing attention to this history. It is a time and place too often neglected in American Indian (and American) history. I also

think he correctly points out that the American Indians who are the subjects of his essay are hardly the innocent primitives of popular stereotypes. The so-called "five civilized" tribes inhabiting northeastern Oklahoma were so-named because they readily adapted themselves to European customs. Among these Indians were doctors, lawyers, judges, teachers, and planters -- many of whom were well-educated and doubtless, many of whom possessed an acquisitive and entrepreneurial spirit.

Professor Miner also ascribes the failure of economic development projects in this region to the well-meaning though misguided efforts of groups he labels as "do-gooders". These groups were reformers who sought to hasten assimilation through "civilizing" legislation such as the Allotment Acts. Again, I think the record generally upholds Professor Miner's thesis. However, Professor Miner goes beyond the historical record to suggest an alternative version of the historical events that might have transpired in the absence of reforming "do-gooders". It is this hypothetical alternative with which I substantially disagree, and especially because of its implications for economic development in contemporary Indian country.

The villains in Professor Miner's analysis are the various reform groups with interests in Indian affairs in the late 19th century. Anticipating the disappearance of American Indians, these groups sought to "humanely" facilitate the extinction of American Indians by helping them become part of what was then the Great American Melting Pot. Surprisingly (as he is aware), Professor Miner turns to an unlikely lot to find the heroes of this saga -- the robber barons of 19th century industrial America. This is most surprising, if for no other reason than this group is rarely held up as heroic exemplars in even the most cheery annals of American history. On the contrary, these men are remembered mostly for their avarice, duplicity, and ruthless business dealings -- so why should we make them heroes?

According to Professor Miner, robber barons such as Jay Gould had no interest whatsoever in hastening the assimilation of American Indians. On the contrary, business interests were anxious to by-pass the third-party protectors of Indian interests and deal directly with tribal leaders for the exploitation of Indian resources. Such direct dealings reinforced the image of legitimate authority among Indian leaders, and by implication, the sovereignty of tribal governments. From this standpoint, the integrity of tribal governments and possibly other cultural institutions would have been better served if 19th century capitalism had been allowed to develop unimpeded throughout the Indian territory. Of course, the underlying implication of this perspective is that the robber barons of early American capitalism took a benign (or at least neutral) view of tribal sovereignty, were actively opposed to western settlement, and that the reformist "do-gooders" actively thwarted the capitalistic aspirations of an otherwise enterprising and incipient class of Indian capitalists. If only Jay Gould, J.D. Rockefeller, or J.P. Morgan had been appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Indian country might be a very different place today.

What is wrong with this picture? It is difficult to retrospectively impute with certainty the political and economic aspirations of any group. Speculating from other contexts, however, it is possible to raise plausible objections to the eventual role of early American industrial capitalists in preserving tribal institutions. The most important of these objections is that regardless of any short-term coincidence of interests, the long term political and economic interests of the tribes and early industrial capitalism were fundamentally opposed.

Early American capitalism, no less than modern capitalism, depended on easy access to markets and to labor in order to function. American Indians, even in the Indian territory, never represented a sizable market nor a cheap source of easily exploited labor (see Jacobsen, 1984). Agreements and joint ventures involving Indian tribes and big business are probably most accurately viewed as agreements made out of convenience. When such agreements ceased to be convenient, it seems certain that big business would have resorted to some other means, military or legal, to obtain access to Indian resources. Given the rampant racism of the period, it seems very unlikely that the white parties to these agreements viewed their Indian counterparts as political and economic equals.

For the same reasons, to suggest as Professor Miner does, that the political interests of early American capitalism were more closely aligned to the interests of Indians than to those of the western settlers is misleading at best and wrong at worst. From the outset, the western settlers provided a market essential for the spread of industrial capitalism, and later, they also represented a cheap source of labor. Without the western settlers, for example, the construction of the railroads linking east with west would have been a pointless exercise. Furthermore, from the standpoint of race and racism, the majority of settlers might have been illiterate immigrants, but they were Christian and white. Among the tribes, a few were the former but none could claim the latter.

Besides overlooking the fundamental opposition of interests between Indians and capitalists, Professor Miner's paper is problematic for understanding the significance of economic development for American Indians today. The most serious problem is that Professor Miner's discussion is an instance of using the exceptional to prove the rule. In fairness to Professor Miner, at no point does he try to generalize his argument, but accepting his thesis leads to the conclusion that Indian tribes might benefit most by dealing directly with developers and other capitalists, and that third party intervention in these deals is generally harmful. However, opposing interests notwithstanding, it is important to realize that the Indians that Professor Miner describes were, by standards of the time, exceptionally sophisticated; they were literate and well-acquainted with European customs. Whether Indian leaders less knowledgeable about the ways of white men and American business could have done as well as leaders such as Dennis Bushyhead is certainly open to debate. Even in Oklahoma, the one-time vast wealth of Osage has not meant the creation of sustained economic activity or the smallest semblance of lasting prosperity for this tribe.

The shortcoming of Professor Miner's conclusions about Indian economic development is that one might wish to believe that tribes might have done better by dealing directly with big business but looking at the long term interests of early American capitalists makes this questionable. If the reformers were well intentioned but misguided, then the early robber barons lacked even the best of intentions. And contrary to Professor Miner's closing words, if things are not better, then they can always be worse. As Professor Vinje's paper argues, the recent record of big business in Indian country is sufficiently disappointing to suggest that Jay Gould may not have been a very good Commissioner of Indian Affairs after all.

MODERN STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY

Compared to Professor Miner's paper, the paper by Professor Vinje is a somewhat less controversial though no less interesting view of Indian economic development. Unlike Miner's paper, Vinje surveys recent attempts to stimulate economic activity in a number of different locations. He outlines several broad strategies that have been used for reservation development and a recurring theme throughout his discussion is that none of these strategies have been very successful. Despite the best efforts of many tribes, deepening economic dependency continues to be a fact of life in Indian country.

I found little to disagree with in Professor Vinje's paper. His arguments are moderate, perhaps too moderate, insofar as they do not stray far from the empirical record. However, I also found his analysis thought provoking, and it caused me to wonder about a number of issues that he raises but does not explore in-depth. The first concerns what is meant by the concept of "economic dependency". We have conferences devoted to this topic yet it is unlikely that we have a single shared idea about what this term means. Along these lines, in a world that is becoming rapidly more interdependent, is it even conceivable to think of truly independent, as opposed to dependent, reservation economies? Likewise, does economic dependency perforce imply economic powerless and vulnerability? Third world debtor nations such as Brazil and Mexico are the often cited victims of global economic dependency. Yet, if the economies of these nations fail, the failure of the international banking system and the economies of the industrial nations would not be far behind. If the economic well-being of the industrial world hinges on the fate of the third world, wherein does dependency truly reside?

This example underscores the point that economic dependency is extremely complex, and dealing with this problem will require complex solutions. Calls for self-sufficient reservation economies are probably too late. As Professor Vinje suggests, many, if not most reservations do not have the necessary resources to become fully self-sufficient, and as I am suggesting, the world has become far too complex to ignore our mutual inter-dependencies. Instead of overcoming dependency, perhaps tribal leaders should be looking for ways of using their dependency to their best advantage. One way of thinking about this is in terms of an idea commonly known as "leverage".

Economic leverage involves the deployment of relatively small amounts of economic resources in ways that will maximize the economic power of those resources. This is hardly a new idea; it is a cornerstone in the strategic planning of most financial institutions. The notion of leverage is not widespread in tribal planning, but again, it is not unknown in Indian country. Tribal governments have made use of the economic leverage provided by legal decisions upholding sovereignty claims to establish duty-free stores and gaming operations. It would be a mistake, however, to think that economic leverage is limited to the establishment of tax refuges and bingo parlors. On the contrary, the Lummi in Washington used their fishing rights to establish an aquaculture industry and the Passamaquoddy in Maine have parlayed their land settlements into a substantial resource base of investments (Olson, in press).

The traditional economic development strategies outlined by Professor Vinje have not, as he points out, lessened economic dependency. This is not surprising because the strategies he describes are designed to stimulate economic growth and not to enhance economic power. Economic growth and economic power are not mutually exclusive, insofar as the former often begets the latter. Yet economic leverage is not a necessary outcome of growth, and growth does not always bring leverage. And there are other sources of economic leverage besides

growth. The consequence of looking to growth as the only source of economic leverage is continued dependency. This has been the case not only in Indian country but also in every other small community seeking economic vitality through traditional development strategies (Summers et al., 1976). Professor Vinje correctly observes that efforts to bring low wage manufacturing jobs to reservations, jobs that assuredly will keep workers below poverty, can hardly be considered a model for economic success. Reservation Indians cannot compete for low-wage jobs with the unemployed of Haiti or Senegal and there is no rational reason to expect them to do so.

The challenge to overcoming economic dependency in Indian country does not rest in finding ways to promote only growth. The real challenge is to find ways to manage the scarce resources available to Indian people in ways that will maximize their economic power. The time for economic self-sufficiency through growth strategies has probably passed, the time for total economic self-sufficiency may also be part of the past, for America as well as for Indian people. What remains ahead is to find ways of achieving economic power that will provide Indian people greater strength in the market and with this strength, they will find ways of overcoming economic dependency.

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COMMENTS ON ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY IN INDIAN COMMUNITIES

Phillip Martin,
Chief
Mississippi Band Of Choctaw Indians

I intend to speak to you this evening not from a scholarly historical or econometric viewpoint on resolving the question of Indian economic dependency, but as a person who has been actively involved in a tribal government for 30 years, and who more recently has overseen the creation of over 1200 private sector manufacturing jobs on the Mississippi Choctaw reservation. This economic take-off for our tribe has been accomplished both through negotiations with present-day major national corporations, of the sort addressed by Dr. Miner in his paper, and through internal economic planning involving a choice of strategies, as described by Dr. Vinje in his paper.

First, some background on the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. The 4,500 members of the tribe, descendants of the Choctaw people who resisted the forced removals to Oklahoma between 1830 and 1907, live on and near 22,000 acres of reservation land scattered over eight counties in rural, east central Mississippi. Our region is hilly, remote, and agrarian, though it has never been an area for large crop production -- the main natural resource is timber. The region as a whole is economically underdeveloped; and for many years the Choctaw people were at the bottom of the economic and social ladders, practically all of them subsisting as sharecroppers during the period between the Civil War and the 1960's, when agriculture was mechanized. Throughout, the tribe's culture was zealously preserved, so that even today 95 per cent of tribal households speak exclusively Choctaw in the home.

The tribe organized itself under the provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act in 1945, at which time a Tribal Council was established and the tribe became self-governing, at least on paper. In reality, the tribal government exercised few formal powers, and was ruled by the local Bureau of Indian Affairs staff, who behaved much as described in Dr. Miner's paper.

By the late 1950's, though, large numbers of tribal members had been hit by the agricultural decline, the unemployment rate was reaching toward 80 per cent, and the local leaders who began to emerge, many of them veterans of the military services, began to look toward the tribal government as an instrument for change. This change was facilitated by two major pieces of federal legislation from 1964; the Civil Rights Act, which opened the local job market to some extent to members of the tribe; and the Economic Opportunity Act, which granted us the resources to start local community action programs that could begin to address the basic needs of our people that had long been denied, including inadequate nutrition, lack of income, low educational levels, and lack of employment. At around the same time, the first high school opened on the reservation; and our students were no longer required to travel to Oklahoma or North Carolina for their secondary educations.

Based upon an accumulation of these federal programs, first from the Office of Economic Opportunity, then from the traditional Indian agencies, the BIA and IHS, and other federal discretionary grants, the tribal government developed itself into a strong and creative institution. Early on, we centralized administrative functions, established definitive policies and procedures for a wide range of tribal governmental activities (finance, personnel, elections), and were

the first tribe to obtain a federal indirect cost rate to finance the management of the tribal government. The strengthening of the tribal government was a gradual process that took place between the late 60's and 1979, perhaps the most important step of which was a revision of the Tribal Constitution in 1975, which separated the tribal executive and legislative branches, and increased the terms for tribal officials, including members of the Tribal Council, from two years to four. It also staggered the terms of Council members, so that at any one time there were always at least eight of the 16 total who had experience in governmental service.

Once efficiency and stability had been brought to the tribal government, and the unemployment rate had been lowered somewhat through the creation of jobs in the tribal social programs, we were ready to begin to address the overall unemployment problem and the reservation economy.

Actually, we had tried some economic development in the late 60's and early 70's, and were notably unsuccessful -- our tribal industrial park produced nothing but hay for about a decade. We fired off letters to major corporations throughout the country, and some even came to visit (including one, the American Greetings Corporation, which I will come back to later); but none showed any interest. At that time, of course, the tribal government had barely begun to develop, and our reservation was devoid of infrastructure -- these and the underdeveloped nature of the entire region meant we really had nothing of significance to offer to the American business establishment.

After we had strengthened the tribal government and had a means to marshall our only resource, the human resource, though, we did have something to offer. In terms of Dr. Miner's thesis, we had established a tribal sovereignty which had not existed before, and major corporations were able to perceive that they were dealing with an entity that exercised powers, and, as such, could deliver what they wanted. In all this we had only one environmental advantage that I can think of over some other reservations; because our land base is so small, our work force is concentrated geographically -- a prerequisite for manufacturing activity not present on the larger reservations out West, with dispersed populations.

Still, our first, large step forward, was really a gamble on the part of our corporate associates. All economic development involves risk, but the Packard Electric Division of General Motors, in agreeing to assist us in opening a wiring harness assembly plant on the reservation, was taking a very large risk, because we had no track record. Frankly, they were attracted by what they considered the cheap labor available on the reservation. What they ended up with was a supplier with the highest quality rating of any of their suppliers -- one which got them quality products, on time, and at a reasonable price. I firmly believe that at least a part of the cause of this first of our tribal successes was that the plant was wholly tribally owned, operated by a board of directors appointed by the Tribal Council; it was, and continues to be, an extension of the tribal government. Had this first plant been one operated by outsiders, I do not believe we would have succeeded.

Success breeds success. From that start in 1979, we have gone on to build and operate five additional manufacturing plants, and we are working on a sixth. Once the corporations we now call our customers -- these include the Ford Motor Company, Chrysler Corporation, Westinghouse, Xerox, Navistar, and (ten years after their first visit to the reservation) American Greeting Corporation -- saw our productivity and quality levels at that first plant, they were ready to do business with us. Of course, there continued to be obstacles

along the way, especially the necessary but sluggish involvement of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which continues to exercise its "'patriarchal' and 'dictatorial' rules over tribes. . ."

Another major reason for our success is that we have pursued a conscious policy of involving our non-Indian neighbors in our industrial development. Our enterprises, which follow a policy of Indian preference in employment, all have work forces of around 70 per cent Choctaws, 15 per cent blacks, and 15 per cent whites. In this way, we have made sure that our economic success is tied to the economic improvement of the entire east central Mississippi region; and it has done much to bind the wounds that Mississippians suffer as a result of the state's former social policies.

I need to tell you something about the tribe's relationship with our corporate customers, in deference to Dr. Miner's interesting accounts of the Robber Barons' activities in the last century. Corporate America has not changed all that much -- their interest in the bottom line is supreme, and most of their representatives' knowledge of Indian Affairs is limited to stereotypes. Charity is not a part of their action plan; unemployment only interests them insofar as it affects labor force availability. But once you realize that profit is their sole concern, developing a working relationship is not difficult, as long as you have something to offer them.

With Indian people, this is usually labor. But there is another strength we have, that I alluded to before, and this is the quality of our work. There is a sense of cooperation among Indian people that a few centuries of rugged individualism may have diluted in other Americans, which, if managed right, produces high quality results, something that should be used by tribes talking with corporations in their efforts to improve tribal economies. It is an important attribute that does not manifest itself so much in natural resources development or retail sales as it does in the making of things.

As in no doubt clear by now, we on the Choctaw reservation have been primarily following Dr. Vinje's "export model." There are some exceptions that prove the rule. We do derive a little income from the sale of our forest products; and we are currently working on a project to establish a chipper plant for on-and off-reservation timber. We are also constructing a shopping center on the reservation, under which we will venture for the first time into Dr. Vinje's "import substitution model." But our primary strategy has been manufacturing based upon competitive bidding for corporate customers on the open market.

Although there has been significant planning and feasibility determination involved with all of this, I must emphasize to you that our activities in this area have been based on the crucial question of survival --of the tribe and of its individual members. It is not as though we have the leisure to really pick and choose our development strategies; whatever will be most productive for us and produce the largest number of jobs, we must pursue. We are, however, now approaching the point where we may be able to spin-off from our labor-intensive concerns, and begin to move into high tech and higher-paying technical jobs; that is, to diversify our economy. Recently, we have begun receiving large numbers of inquiries from smaller, regional concerns interested in doing business with us, which will someday provide our economy with some independence from the upturns and downturns of the large corporations. Already our wage rates on the average are in excess of those paid by other labor-intensive manufacturers in our immediate area.

On the subject of wages, I do need to note the only small disagreement I have with either of the two papers before this session: Dr. Vinje's pessimistic view of the insurmountable challenge posed by Third World countries for low-wage manufacturing activity. This is a national, not just an Indian, problem, that must be addressed nationally, which derives in part from the greed of some corporations that put cheap labor as their first priority. Many other corporations in the system are resisting this, and for good reason. While American wage rates may be substantially higher than those in the Third World, the cost of production is governed by other factors as well, including transportation costs, timeliness, skills levels, training costs, and (especially important in the American Indian context) political stability. I believe many corporations are making great mistake rushing offshore when they could be contributing to the American economy by locating in depressed areas of this country, including the Indian reservations. If the tribal government on those reservations is a progressive, developed, and stable institution, the potential for a market situation in which "both sides sometimes win" is certainly there.

I'll be happy to take any questions.

THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY AND DEPENDENCE AMONG SUBARCTIC TRIBES BEFORE 1900

Shepard Krech III
Brown University

By the beginning of the twentieth century --the end of the period discussed here-- it was widely assumed that the fur trade had made dependants of Native Americans. One need not search far for examples; indeed, there may be no better one than the influential historian of the frontier, Frederick Jackson Turner, who wrote that the trade had "worked a transformation" on the "savage," that it left tribes without firearms at the "mercy" of those who possessed guns, and that Indians became "dependent upon the white man's supplies."¹

While Turner's concern was with the trade in Wisconsin, far to the south of the subarctic region in which my interest lies,² it is not the least bit difficult to find, in significant texts on the northern trade published in the twentieth century, sentiment paralleling his-- in, for example, the writings of E.E. Rich, the incomparable historian of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Harold A. Innis, formidable scholar of the fur trade in Canada. In 1960, Rich wrote that the "North American Indian had, within one generation of contact with the fur trader, become so utterly dependent on European fire-arms for hunting that the Company was fully justified in claiming (as it did in 1726 for example) that 'many thousand Families of the Natives for want of the supply they Annually receive from us, of Guns, Powder, and Shott, wherewith they kill the Beaver, Buffalo and several other Beasts of that Country, the Flesh whereof is their food, will be the disappointment of the not arrival of said ships, be starved before the next Year.'"³ The phrase, "utterly dependent" or "entirely dependent," sounds a refrain in Rich's work. Common also is the belief that the process of dependence happened quickly: in the context of the eighteenth-century trade, Rich wrote that "within a decade of their becoming acquainted with European goods, tribe after tribe became utterly dependent on regular European supplies. The bow and arrow went out of use, and the Indian starved if he did not own a serviceable gun, powder, and shot, and in his tribal wars he was even more dependent on European arms."⁴

Innis's use of dependence differed from Rich's, in that on a number of occasions he stressed that the Hudson's Bay Company was dependent on Indians who supplied geese, corn, pemmican, or other provisions. Furthermore, it was Innis who said that "the Indian and his culture were fundamental to the growth of Canadian institutions." Yet there is no doubt that he considered Indians as more dependent on whites, especially on their technology, than whites on Indians, and that he believed this to have been due to inherent technological deficiencies in aboriginal Indian culture. "The limited cultural background of the North American hunting peoples," Innis wrote, "provided an insatiable demand for the products of the more elaborate cultural development of Europeans. ...The new technology with its radical innovations brought about such a rapid shift in the prevailing Indian culture as to lead to wholesale destruction of the peoples concerned by warfare and disease. ...New tribes demanded European goods in increasingly large amounts. The fur trade was the means by which this demand of the peoples of a more limited cultural background was met."⁵

Victorian Cultural Ideology

Innis and Rich, both historians, writing two generations and more after Turner, were consumers and synthesizers of much secondary source material published in the nineteenth century and before-- some of it at the time of Turner himself-- which, of course, was prior to the development within anthropology of a relativistic concept of culture. They also were principally interested in the roles of Europeans in the trade. As a consequence, they might well have been susceptible to treating the cultural sentiments in their historical sources less critically than if they had been primarily interested in native culture and basing their assessments on extensive research, focussed on comments on Indians, in archival records as well as on an awareness of ethnographic data.

In fact, we find reflected, to some degree, in Innis's and Rich's comments on dependence, a cultural ideology characteristic of the Victorian period-- so ably explored most recently by George Stocking⁶ -- that persisted vigorously after the end of that era. One finds, in disparate sources from the nineteenth century, a set of related themes concerning the lack of vitality of hunting-fishing people like those in the subarctic and the inevitability of processes that result from contact with the outside world. H.M. Robinson, who travelled though the Canadian north in the 1870s and whose work did not go unnoticed by Innis, is typical. He wrote that the Hudson's Bay Company "feeds, clothes and wholly maintains nine-tenths of the entire population...like the Mexican or Brazilian peon, the Indian trapper is so constantly and, for him, largely in debt to the fur-trade, as to be practically its servant. Twice during the year, perhaps, he is free from debt and his own master; but such freedom is only of momentary duration..."⁷

The image is of the Indian chained by debt, totally reliant on the trading post for his existence, and lacking autonomy. This image was evoked not merely for the subarctic, but it pertained especially to Indians there (and elsewhere) who lacked horticulture. Thus, one finds Francis Parkman declaring that hunters represented "a visible descent in the scale of humanity," but after all he was an admirer of Lewis Henry Morgan for whom "the hunter state is the zero of human society."⁸ Widely accepted in the nineteenth century was the image of the Noble Savage disappearing in the movement westward of civilization-- an expansion of manifest destiny-- as well as the belief that savages would inevitably work their way upward along the evolutionary scale of progress to civilization, even though that might take some time. "As a rule," James Fenimore Cooper asserted, "the red man disappears before the superior moral and physical influence of the white." Native Americans were doomed, none more so than subarctic hunter-fishers who possessed an unimpressive technology and production. Inevitably, they would become dependent.⁹

Twentieth-century Generalizations

Some twentieth-century anthropologists with a proclivity for generalization have also argued that dependence was an inevitable result of the fur trade. Several decades ago, Julian Steward and Robert Murphy, discussing a parallel process of acculturation among the South American Mundurucu and

eastern subarctic Montagnais, spoke of a "rapid" involvement in the barter system, of goods quickly becoming "necessities," of "almost complete economic dependence upon trade goods," and of "early dependency." They hypothesized: "When the people of an unstratified native society barter wild products found in extensive distribution and obtained through individual effort, the structure of the native culture will be destroyed, and the final culmination will be a culture type characterized by individual families having delimited rights to marketable resources and linked to the larger nation through trading centers."¹⁰

Harold Hickerson was an even stronger advocate of a dependency position. He wrote that the fur trade led to "the most drastic transformations in Indian production and exchange relations," that Indians "lost their economic freedom" and were "chained" to posts in "debt slavery," and that the trade was an "exploitative system." Hickerson's so-called Developed Fur Trade that followed an initial period of trade by Indian middlemen "enmeshed the Indians into a vast exploitative network. The Indians had become a kind of vast forest proletariat whose production was raw fur and whose wages were drawn in goods which served only to support them through the trapping season."¹¹

The most recent example in this genre discussed here is the work of Eric Wolf, who in his monumental Europe and the People Without History states that "everywhere" the trade had "ramifying consequences" for native Americans. Some groups may have prospered, but they were the exception; many were "destroyed," "decimated," or "disappeared entirely." Relations balanced in the beginning "gave way to imbalance" and "growing dependence," as Indians became firmly linked to the exchange "as subordinate producers rather than as partners."¹²

Dependence and Dependency

Can we accept these assertions? The subarctic is involved, specifically or by implication, in most of them. Innis and Rich both wrote of native Canada, including the subarctic; Hickerson's assessments were generalized from his work among the Ojibwa; Steward and Murphy based their hypothesis on Eleanor Leacock's work among the Montagnais; and even Wolf included natives of the subarctic in his assessment of the trade, writing at one point --without references and in error unless he had in mind only some members of some very specific "tribal" groups-- that in the eighteenth century, advances of food to Northern Athapaskans "led to a decline in the autonomous hunting activities of the trapping populations."¹³

In order to determine whether or not subarctic Indians did become dependent before 1900, we need first to agree to a definition of dependence, which has generally been used in one of two principal ways. First is dependence as a highly asymmetric form, and in a sense the opposite, of interdependence, not independence. This is dependence as reliance on others. The extreme form of dependence would occur when-- to take a simplistic example-- the fur trader needs nothing from the Indian while the Indian relies on the trader for the fulfillment of all his needs. The greater the magnitude of the interest of the Indian in goods provided by the trader, the greater the extent of control over those goods that the trader has, and the less able the Indian is to substitute for what the trader offers, the greater the degree of dependence. Reliance on technology alone does not produce dependence; reliance on unsubstitutable productive technology and on food does.¹⁴

The second sense of dependence-- the two are by no means mutually exclusive, always kept distinct, or rigorously defined-- is as dependency. In this sense, people who are dependent lack political as well as economic autonomy. They live in societies located on a perceived periphery and lack control over their own economic development. Capitalist core societies at the centers of the expanding world-economy possess that control. Through unequal exchange, dependent societies undergo dependent development or underdevelopment and experience various structural distortions in their economy and social relations. The economy of the dependent society is conditioned by, and subject to, the dominant core society.¹⁵

The two types of dependence thus defined and differentiated, we can ask: to what degree (there always will be a continuum) did dependence or dependency develop in the subarctic before 1900, as a result of dealings with merchant capitalists of the Hudson's Bay and other fur trading companies, of production for exchange not for use, of market relations, and of colonization? Quite clearly, the authors cited at the beginning of this paper thought, when they included the subarctic in their considerations, that dependence, at the very least, did develop. But their comments demand reassessment, not simply because in some we recognize reflected Victorian sentiment, but also in light of the spate of recently-published ethnohistorical materials on Northern Algonquians and Northern Athapaskans.

The Eastern Subarctic

Because of the pressures of time, I will confine my remarks here to Northern Algonquians of the eastern subarctic, for whom contact with Europeans was earliest.¹⁶ There exist sharp disagreements in the literature on these subarctic hunter-fishers over the extent of economic, social, and cultural change after the advent of the European fur trade. Eleanor Leacock, for example, whose ethnographic and historical research stretched over a period of three decades, argued that while changes among the Montagnais and Naskapi were uneven, "within a few generations the Indians near the earliest trade centers around Quebec had become dependent upon trade goods as the mainstay of their existence." Hunting territories, involving usufruct rights to trap lines and furs from animals, developed earliest near the earliest centers of trade. Most, if not all, Indians readily substituted European for native technology and "actively adjusted their whole way of life to meet the demands of a new occupational calling."¹⁷ It is difficult to tell, however, from Leacock's work how much the "dependence" she describes was due to reliance on productive technology or food.

Others have overgeneralized Leacock's conclusions, even though from the outset she distinguished between the histories of various native groups. Dependence is said to have started for a very few groups in the seventeenth century. Everywhere else, the process took much longer. For many western Montagnais, dependence did not become "virtually complete" until approximately 1920. Montagnais in southeast Labrador were still "confirmed nomads" in the 1950s. The "pace of change" throughout most of Labrador was slow; in northern Labrador in the late 19th century, "dependence on trading of furs for food, clothing, and equipment was only beginning," and not until the 1950s did "the economic balance [tip] in favor of ultimate dependence upon the fur-trade (and, in many cases, wage labor) throughout the entire Labrador Peninsula." The

distinctions drawn by Leacock became most sharp in her most recently published work: different Montagnais-Naskapis took different stances; some "threw their fortunes with the Europeans" and re-oriented their lives to center on the post, but many did not; diseases complicated adaptations during the fur-trade period; traders were "as dependent upon their labour as they were upon the trade"; until well into the 20th century, "few Montagnais-Naskapis became full-time trappers," they became dependent on the trade only "to some degree," the land and its resources for subsistence remained important, and the changes that occurred "were slow, uneven, and far from complete."¹⁸

The contrast between the fur-trade experiences of different Northern Algonquian groups is nowhere greater than between Cree coasters or Home Guard, on one hand, and Cree uplanders, inlanders, northern or southern hunters, or trading Indians, on the other, who lived both east (East Cree) and west (West Main Cree) of Hudson and James Bays. Clearly, the goose-hunting coasters or Home Guard who were attracted to the bay-side posts were strongly affected by the trade by the late-seventeenth century. In the eighteenth century at Fort Albany, the Home Guard was fed oatmeal while they awaited the arrival of geese they would shoot for the post, in exchange for guns, kettles, twine, blankets, and cloth, and both extra geese and fish were secured for starving Indians in winter. The extermination of caribou in the late-eighteenth century made the lives of these Indians more precarious, more dependent. In the mid-nineteenth century, they went to the post where they were employed spring and summer, and in winter lingered for food, either set aside from provisions provided at an earlier season by the very same natives or from the European larder. This goose-hunting Home Guard at Fort Albany, concludes Charles Bishop, who has written of it in some detail, was "increasingly dependent on the trading post," beginning in the eighteenth century. The Home Guard elsewhere, as at Rupert House in the mid-nineteenth century (as Toby Morantz has suggested), came to the post frequently to exchange furs and provisions for various goods, including food; in the late-nineteenth century, East Cree coasters who worked at posts were paid with flour, and relief instituted then increased after the turn of the century.¹⁹

In sharp contrast to the Home Guard were the more numerous upland or inland Cree, who were not terribly interested in the trade before the twentieth century. East Cree inlanders valued guns, ammunition, and ironworks and were encouraged to exchange provisions, but were not the least bit reliant on the post until the mid-nineteenth century when there was a decline in numbers of caribou. Even then, they received little, with the exception of several desperate families that obtained provisions, and they came infrequently, exhibiting an indifference and independence quite unlike the coastal Cree.²⁰

A quite different pattern of adaptation was shown by the Northern Ojibwa, who, as a result of overhunting and the extermination of caribou, moose, and beaver in their territory in the early-nineteenth century, began a decades-long reliance on fish and hare for subsistence. They also, according to Charles Bishop, became what they had not been before: dependent. In the 1820s, the Northern Ojibwa, to use Bishop's phrasing, were "completely reliant" or "totally reliant upon the trading post for survival"; they were "dependent upon the trading post and the good will of the factor"; they "could not live without assistance from the post."²¹ However, even though the Northern Ojibwa seemed reliant on the post for productive technology, it is difficult to surmise from Bishop's analysis either the extent to which they were dependent also for their food or their success in substituting traditional tools for European ones that

had broken or were in short supply. Ecologically, the Northern Ojibwa had depended upon resources that were greatly depleted by the trade and as a result became dependent for their subsistence on fish and cyclical populations of hare; they were reliant on the post for productive technology and skins for snowshoes. For some years after 1820, there was great distress. Indians who came starving to one post were fed fish and potatoes, although it is unclear how many were fed and how many were not, or how long they were fed, or how many posts actually provisioned natives. After 1860, some Northern Ojibwa came to posts for flour when hares were scarce, but even in the 1880s, not more than four pounds of flour were given to each person each year.²²

Not until the late-nineteenth century and the early twentieth was there a break in this pattern of stable scarcity and deprivation, in part a result of the return of big game, and in part due to the breaking of Hudson's Bay Company monopoly conditions, to improved transportation facilities that brought more food to stores, to more systematic missionization, and to the signing of treaties and obtaining of annuities.²³

In fact, the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries throughout the eastern subarctic seemed a critical period for the intensification of dependence, as Arthur Ray has recently argued, and more natives joined those relative few who, either because they married traders and mothered post-dwelling mixed-blood families or because they recurrently formed part of a seasonal or annual labor pool, had thrown their lot in with the trade, accepting a higher degree of dependence, long before.²⁴ Even today, however, we must recognize the peculiar form dependence takes in subarctic communities in which subsistence from the bush remains important. For some Crees, the bush, exploited with technology obtained principally with cash, of which money received for furs figures prominently, provides almost one-half the amount of calories consumed or an even greater proportion by weight; for other Crees more dependent on wage work and transfer payments, the caloric amount is lower by one-quarter.²⁵

European fur-trade companies, capitalist enterprises, penetrated aboriginal economies to produce certain transformations. However, this was only after they had adapted themselves to some degree to native cultural understandings of exchange, and the penetration was incomplete. Moreover, aspects of traditional culture have persisted, notably among those natives who depend most on bush foods for subsistence. For them, as Adrian Tanner has suggested, dual modes of production exist, one domestic and focused on the bush and marked by exchange according to traditional cultural values, the other capitalist and centered on the town and non-traditional understandings of exchange. <26>

It is possible to draw from this overly brief critical assessment of work in the eastern subarctic certain conclusions that serve also as propositions to test (and that I think will hold) for Athapaskans in the western subarctic. These are: (1) individual natives, as well as individual local bands, had very different reactions to the trade; (2) for many Indians, the interest and reliance upon European technology was intense, but for others, interest was not great and reliance slight; (3) traders were sometimes as dependent upon Indians-- and at times more so-- as Indians were upon traders; (4) reliance upon goods did not mean total dependence (as defined above) or lack of interdependence, and a state of dependence at one moment did not preclude the development of interdependence at some future time; (5) while some individuals in some bands, and some bands themselves, did become dependent (in the first sense of the term) before 1900, most did not, and we do not see the development of much if

any dependency prior to this date; (6) beginning in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, several developments took place, including the more frequent trading of increasing quantities of food, political intrusions that included the negotiation and signing of treaties, and the more significant impact of missionaries and their ideas on such matters as formal education, that set the stage for increasing dependence and for the development of dependency; and (7), in many (but not all) subarctic communities today, bush foods remain important for subsistence, and the penetration of the culture of merchant capitalism remains incomplete. So also, therefore, is the development of dependence or dependency, or both, not as extreme in the subarctic as it is elsewhere on the continent.

END NOTES

1. Frederick Jackson Turner, The Character and Influence of the Fur Trade in Wisconsin (Norman, 1977) pp. 77-79, quoted in Ramsey Cook "The Social and Economic Frontier in North America" in Howard Lamar and Leonard Thompson, eds., The Frontier in History (New Haven, 1981), pp. 176-77.
2. For the names and boundaries of tribes in the subarctic, as well as the limits of the region itself, see the essays in June Helm, ed., Handbook of North American Indians. Volume 6: Subarctic, (Washington, D.C., 1981).
3. E.E. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company 1670-1870. Volume I: 1670-1763 (Toronto, 1960), p.494.
4. Rich, Hudson's Bay Company, pp. 71,429,526,594; Rich, The Fur Trade and the Northwest to 1857 (Toronto, 1967), pp. 102-103. See also Rich, "Trade Habits and Economic Motivation Among the Indians of North America," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 26 (1960), 35-53.
5. Harold A. Innis, The Fur Trade in Canada (Toronto, 1970), pp. 117,133-34,143,235,388-89.
6. George Stocking, Victorian Anthropology (New York, 1967).
7. H.M. Robinson, The Great Fur Land or Sketches of Life in the Hudson's Bay Territory (New York, 1879), p. 335, a work that appears in the bibliography of Innis's The Fur Trade in Canada.
8. Parkman is quoted and discussed by Bruce Trigger in Natives and Newcomers: Canada's "Heroic Age" Reconsidered (Kingston and Montreal, 1985), pp. 12-14; for Morgan, see R.H. Pearce, Savagism and Civilization (Baltimore and London, 1965), p. 132.
9. Pearce, Savagism and Civilization, pp.132,201 and passim; Robert F. Berkhofer Jr., The White Man's Indian (New York, 1978) pp.90,92,108; R.A. Billington, Land Of Savagery Land of Promise (New York, 1981), pp.124,142.
10. Julian Steward and Robert Murphy, "Tappers and Trappers: Parallel Process

in Acculturation," Economic Development and Cultural Change 4 (1956): 335-355, pp. 336-8,353.

11. Harold Hickerson, "Fur Trade Colonialism and the North American Indians," Journal of Ethnic Studies 1, no. 2 (1973): 15-44.

12. Eric R. Wolf, Europe and the People Without History (Berkeley, 1982). See also E. Service, 1971, Primitive Social Organization (New York, 1971), pp. 77ff.

13. Wolf, Europe and the People Without History, p. 175.

14. See James Caporaso, "Dependence, dependency, and power in the global system: a structural and behavioral analysis," International Organization 32, nos. 1-2 (1978): 13-43.

15. It is this meaning of dependence that is explored in the various strands of the world-systems and dependencia literature. Controversial theoretically, dependency nevertheless is a strong descriptive concept, if thickly contextualized in historical, political-economic, and cultural circumstances. See: Caporaso, "Dependence, dependency, and power"; R. Fiala and F. Ramirez, "Dependence, service sector growth, and economic development in less developed countries, 1960-1975," Comparative Social Research 7 (1984): 399-424; P. Cutright and R. Adams, "Economy, reproduction, and fertility in Asia and Latin America," Comparative Social Research 7 (1984): 111-132; R. Duvall, "Dependence and dependencia theory: notes toward precision of concept and argument," International Organization 32, nos. 1-2 (1978): 51-78. See also Richard White, The Roots of Dependency (Lincoln, 1983).

16. In the expanded version of this essay to be prepared for a planned edited volume of papers from this conference, the remarks will be extended to all areas of the subarctic where the Hudson's Bay Company conducted trade.

17. Eleanor Leacock, "The Montagnais 'Hunting Territory' and the Fur Trade," AAA Memoir No.78. (Washington, D.C., 1954); E. Leacock, Myths of Male Dominance (New York, 1981), pp. 36,38.

18. Leacock, "The Montagnais 'Hunting Territory,'" pp. 11-39 passim; Myths of Male Dominance, pp. 59,61; "The Montagnais of the Labrador Peninsula," pp. 140-171 in R. Bruce Morrison and C. Roderick Wilson, eds., Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience, pp. 145, 159-62 et passim.

19. The work of Charles Bishop is valuable for its insights into coastal Cree adaptations, although I do not find convincing his argument that the inland Cree became dependent. See Charles A. Bishop, "Demography, ecology, and trade among the Northern Ojibwa and Swampy Cree," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology 3, no. 1 (1972): 58-72; "Ojibwa, Cree, and the Hudson's Bay Company in Northern Ontario: Culture and Conflict in the Eighteenth Century," in A. W. Rasporich, ed., Western Canada: Past and Present (Calgary, 1975), pp. 150-162; "The Western James Bay Cree: Aboriginal and Early Historic Adaptations," Prairie Forum 8 (1983): 147- 155; "The First Century: Adaptive Changes among the Western James Bay Cree between the Early Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," in Shepard Krech III, ed., The Subarctic Fur Trade:

Native Social and Economic Adaptations (Vancouver, 1984), pp. 21-53. See also Toby Morantz "Dwindling Animals and Diminished Lands: Early Twentieth Century Developments in Eastern James Bay," in W. Cowan, ed., Papers of the Eighteenth Algonquian Conference, (Ottawa, 1987), pp. 209-227; Carol M. Judd, "Sakie, Esquawenoe, and the Foundation of a Dual-Native Tradition at Moose Factory," in Krech, ed., The Subarctic Fur Trade, pp. 81-97.

20. Toby Morantz, "The Fur Trade and the Cree of James Bay," in Carol M. Judd and Arthur J. Ray, eds., Old Trails and New Directions: Papers of the Third North American Fur Trade Conference (Toronto, 1980); Morantz "A reconstruction of early nineteenth century social organization in eastern James Bay," in W. Cowan, ed., Papers of the Thirteenth Algonquian Conference (Ottawa, 1982), pp. 261-275; Morantz, "'Not Annual Visitors': The Drawing in to Trade of Northern Algonquian Caribou Hunters," in W. Cowan, ed., Actes du 14^{ème} Congrès des Algonquianistes (Ottawa, 1983), pp. 57-73; 1984, "Economic and Social Accommodations of the James Bay Inlanders to the Fur Trade," in Krech, ed., The Subarctic Fur Trade, pp. 55-80; "Dwindling Animals"; Daniel Francis and Toby Morantz, Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay 1600-1870 (Kingston and Montreal, 1983).

21. Bishop, The Northern Ojibwa and the Fur Trade, (Toronto, 1974), pp. 12,148,152,255. Bishop's work is invaluable, even though I find his use of "dependence" indiscriminate.

22. Bishop, The Northern Ojibwa, pp. 12-13, 107-194, and 277-97 passim; "Demography, Ecology, and Trade"; "The Emergence of Hunting Territories among the Northern Ojibwa," Ethnology 9 (1970): 1-15; "The emergence of the Northern Ojibwa: Social and Economic Consequences," American Ethnologist 3 (1976): 39-54; "Cultural and Biological Adaptations to Deprivation: The Northern Ojibwa Case," in C.D. Laughlin and I. Brady, eds., Extinction and Survival in Human Populations (New York, 1978), pp. 208-230. See also E.S. Rogers and M.B. Black, "Subsistence Strategy in the Fish and Hare Period, Northern Ontario: The Weagamow Ojibwa, 1880-1920," Journal of Anthropological Research 32 (1976): 1-43.

23. Bishop, The Northern Ojibwa; Rogers and Black, "Subsistence Strategy"; E.S. Rogers, "Changing Settlement Patterns of the Cree-Ojibwa of Northern Ontario," Journal of Anthropological Research 19 (1963): 64-88.

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RELATIONS BETWEEN NORTHERN PLAINS INDIANS AND THE AMERICAN FUR COMPANY TO 1867

W. R. Swagerty
Department of History
University of Idaho

In the fall of 1842, David D. Mitchell, the recently-appointed Superintendent of Indian Affairs in Saint Louis wrote the following in his annual report to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs:

No advances whatever have been made towards civilization amongst the tribes on the upper Missouri; and, so long as they continue the wandering life in which they so much delight, all efforts directed to that object will prove to be only a useless waste of time and money. While there remains such a vast extent of territory covered over with innumerable herds of buffalo and other game, there seems but little prospect of their condition being materially changed. Generations will perhaps pass away before this territory becomes much more circumscribed....The utter destitution of timber, the sterility of sandy soil, together with the coldness and dryness of the climate, furnish obstacles which not even "Yankee enterprise" is likely to overcome. A beneficent Creator seems to have intended this dreary region as an asylum for the Indians....Here no inducements are offered to the ever-restless Saxon breed to erect their huts.¹

Mitchell, who joined the American Fur Company in 1828, and resided as trader among tribes of the upper Missouri country throughout the 1830s,² continued his report with the following prediction:

Should the buffalo and other game in course of time disappear from the prairies, there are a few rich little valleys on the banks of small streams, affording timber sufficient to furnish huts and fuel for the few wanderers whom necessity will compel to seek some other means of subsistence. Should this period ever arrive, a few domestic cattle might be introduced into the country, and the Indians would readily become wandering herdsmen--the Tartars of America....They never can be made agriculturists or mechanics....They will remain a wandering, half-civilized, though happy people.³

Nine years later, Superintendent Mitchell had not given up the idea of making ranchers of Plains Indians. He had, however, changed his mind that they could forever be wandering herdsmen. In his report to Congress of 1851 urging ratification of the Treaty of Fort Laramie with various Plains tribes, Mitchell pushed for \$50,000 in annuities for fifty years arguing that this small concession would, "...in all probability, save the country from the ruinous and useless expenses of a war against the prairie tribes, which would cost many millions, and be productive of nothing but increased feelings of hostility on the part of the Indians and annoyance and vexation to the government." The proposed annuities would be used, in tandem with a policy of "laying off of the country into geographical or rather national domains" to furnish tribes with the

means to gradually turn their attention to agricultural pursuits, including government aid to make them graziers as well as hunters.⁴

Mitchell got his annuities for a period of ten rather than fifty years but the treaty at Horse Creek, the foundation of federal Indian policy with an estimated 10,000 Plains peoples for the next fifteen years, that "... landmark on the national path to a reservation system..."⁵ was never ratified; nor were Indian signatories consulted about the changes.⁶ "Touching the pen" from 1851 on was to have many mixed meanings for Plains peoples, the agents assigned to their charge, and those many civilian hat wearers who had been operating posts and wintering houses in Indian country for two generations since the Louisiana Purchase.⁷

Writing from Fort Laramie in 1851, Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet optimistically predicted:

...The council will doubtless produce the good effects they have a right to expect. It will be the commencement of a new era for the Indians--an era of peace. In future, peaceable citizens may cross the desert unmolested, and the Indian will have little to dread from the bad white man, for justice will be rendered to him.⁸

Not everyone, especially many whites involved in the Indian trade, shared this vision. In his autobiography, Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri, Charles Larpenteur reflected on the policies of the 1850s. He blamed the treaty-making process and the false assumptions that were carried to Horse Creek for subsequent intensification of hostilities among Plains tribes and for Indian-white skirmishes from the mid-1850s through the 1860s. He also condemned most of the Indian agents who had been active on the Missouri during his years of residence, noting:

...I fully believe that all the Indian agents were of the same materials; and had those men been ever so well qualified to fill their office, they could not have done it under the existing rules and regulations. Once in the Indian country they came entirely under the influence of the American Fur Company, and could not help themselves.⁹

As for the Sioux, Assiniboiné, Blackfeet and other Missouri River tribes with which he traded and lived, Larpenteur dismissed the notion that the federal government through its agents or its armies had, by 1870, reduced any of them to total dependency. Instead, he claimed, "I know the chief motive for yielding was not the sword, the bullet, or the bayonet, but hunger and the prospect of starvation."¹⁰

By the time of Larpenteur's death in 1872, his former employer, the American Fur Company, had been out of the Indian trade only five years, having gradually liquidated its assets in the far West to other private concerns and the United States Army. The economic history of the A.F.C. and the socio-economic histories of Upper Missouri and Plains peoples further west are intertwined and often inseparable, so important was this business giant and its contractual partner firms from 1826 to 1867. The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of the American Fur Company and its operations on the Upper Missouri in the context of the debate over relative dependence or independence of Indian hunters and provisioners on non-Indian owned and managed systems and supply networks.

Testing this question for the Upper Missouri is difficult owing to a number of factors. First, although Grace Lee Nute alerted the historical profession in 1927 to the existence and open access to "practically all the correspondence and books of the largest American business firm of the period [1835-1845]....," there still is no authoritative history of the A. F. C. In fact, except for inclusion in general histories of the western fur trade, and John Sunder's monograph on business aspects of the company on the Upper Missouri, none exists at all.¹¹ Most historians are aware that the firm was founded by John Jacob Astor in 1808 and was headquartered in New York City under the direction of the Astors and Ramsay Crooks, and that the primary interest of the company was in the fur, skin and robe trades of North America. Few realize the extensive vertical integration pioneered by Astor and Crooks and the diversification of activities ranging from Lake Superior fisheries, the maple sugar industry, mining of lead, the sale and transportation of flour, outfitting of tourists, scientists, explorers, government agents, and artists on various western ventures, and steamboating on western waters and the Atlantic seaboard.¹²

Early historians of the western fur trade, especially Hiram Martin Chittenden, certainly recognized the scale and geographic scope of A.F.C. operations out of Saint Louis. Yet, even Chittenden was unclear on the chronology of the growth of A.F.C. influences. By 1823, Astor had infiltrated the Saint Louis business establishment and within three years had secured a contract with Bernard Pratte and Company for exclusive handling of A.F.C. interests in the far West. In 1827 the Western Department of the American Fur Company was formed with Pratte and Company managing field operations and the New York house of Astor buying merchandise for the trade and selling furs acquired from the interior for healthy percentages of the total profits. That same year the Upper Missouri Outfit was created to tap the robe and fur trade from the Big Sioux River to the Rocky Mountains. Under the direction of Kenneth McKenzie, trade was expanded beyond the Sioux and village Indians of the Missouri and Platte rivers to include the Assiniboine, Crow, Blackfeet and Gros Ventre.¹³

With the official retirement of John Jacob Astor in 1834, the A.F.C. was reorganized. Ramsay Crooks bought out Astor's Northern Department and retained the name, American Fur Company, for operations headquartered at La Pointe, on the Apostle Islands in Lake Superior, with an accounting office in New York and agents in Europe. William, son of John Jacob Astor, remained active in this branch of the company. Severely impacted by the business depression of 1837 and by stiff competition in its midwestern sector of operations, the A.F.C. went into receivership in 1842. Crooks rebounded and continued as buyer and seller of furs in New York, still using the old company name. Former contractual partners in Saint Louis, Montreal, and elsewhere continued to rely on the "Headquarters" of the A.F.C. in New York and their European agents as brokers and suppliers until Crooks' death in 1859.¹⁴

The Western Department was purchased in 1834 by Pratte, Chouteau and Company of Saint Louis. This was legally and financially separate from the Crooks /Astor concerns and later known to merchants as Pierre Chouteau Jr. and Company. Several subsequent mergers and reorganizations occurred from 1834 to 1865, but to fur men and Indians alike, anything Astor, Crooks, Chouteau, or McKenzie sank a nickel into was perceived as an A.F.C. operation. Pierre Chouteau, Jr. died in 1865 at which time the company's remaining assets, most notable among them--Fort Benton on the upper Missouri--were sold to the Minnesota firm of Hubbell and Hawley.¹⁵

Chittenden's 1902 survey of the American fur trade was the first work to properly separate the fur and robe industry on the Plains and in the upper Missouri country from that of the Rocky Mountains and Pacific Northwest. However, even Chittenden was lured away from an indepth economic appraisal of the company's significance out of its Saint Louis office in favor of a popular, often romanticized account of the exploration and exploits of individual white trappers and traders commonly represented as "mountain men of the far West."¹⁶ What he did have to say about the white side of the fur trade equation was usually chronologically sound and often perceptive. Unfortunately the same cannot be said of his portrayal of the Indian and his role in the trade. Like many others of his generation, Chittenden did not allow for the possibility that native groups historically controlled their own destinies, although he did ascribe to native hunters and processors the credit for the success and relative longevity of the American Fur Company.¹⁷ He also convincingly attributed Indian-white hostility in the Rocky Mountain fur trade theater to white attempts to side-step or avoid entirely Indian hunters and provisioners.¹⁸

Chittenden employed a basic systems analysis in his breakdown of the fur trade of the far West, but he was not very interested in demography or in quantification of data, despite his background as an engineer. His successors have also shied away from tackling the mass of financial ledgers in archives housing A.F.C. materials, notably the A.F.C. Papers in the New York Historical Society and the Chouteau Collection in the Missouri Historical Society.¹⁹ Herein lies a second major methodological problem in assessing dependency on the Plains. No one to date has provided more than an impressionist view of the scale of economies in question. What we have are some excellent ethnographies and ethnohistories of individual tribal groups such as the Blackfeet and the Cheyenne with suggestive analysis of the "impact" of trade on cultural systems,²⁰ but little that ties tribal experiences across the Plains together in the context of the macroeconomic histories of the culture area. Richard White has argued that "[d]ependency resulted not only from a single material and economic process that obliterated or subordinated all else, but rather from a complex interchange of environmental, economic, political, and cultural influences understandable only within specific histories." And he has shown how case studies from three separate culture areas inductively inform us of larger questions than the micro-histories of the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos might at first suggest.²¹

White has alerted us to the dangers of leapfrogging to conclusions about tribal experiences beyond the data on specific groups and has carefully chosen three cultures from three separate culture areas. Other cross-cultural approaches that imply broad application for entire culture areas, especially those employing ethnohistorical methods, have been established for the Plains and are equally useful in testing questions such as dependency across wide spaces and long time periods.²² I am convinced from preliminary research in the American Fur Company Papers and the Chouteau Papers that studies comparable in breadth and depth to those generated out of Hudson's Bay Company Archives are necessary and possible to test questions on production and distribution of furs, skins, hides, and foodstores, as well as Indian and white consumer preferences and habits. However, no individual or team such as Ray and Freeman has come forward to quantify and correlate data on trade.²³ This is essential if we are to gauge in a meaningful way the changes in native trade systems across time and their relative dependence on Euroamerican economic organization and ideology.

The place to begin, it seems to me, is with preexisting native exchange networks. Here I am not arguing exclusively for a materialist analysis of Plains

trade behavior, but I do suggest it important to see the larger economic picture of Plains exchange networks during protohistoric as well as in historic times in order to understand subsequent changes in social and political, as well as economic life among Plains peoples.

Fortunately our awareness of the complexity of Indian trade of the Plains has advanced considerably in recent decades, largely through the conceptual ideas of John C. Ewers and application of those ideas by W. Raymond Wood and others. It is now quite clear that the protohistoric Plains was an elaborate network of trade trails with vortices of seasonal trading activity comparable to marketplaces or fairs in European economic development. And these in turn were linked to other culture areas.²⁴

Whether or not each culture maintained total self-sufficiency at the subsistence level and therefore could have survived without benefit of infusion of goods or ideas from outsiders is a moot point given the overwhelming evidence that none did or had to when Europeans began advancing onto the Plains in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In a geographical context, the Plains served both as "gateway" and a central place for trade well before 1780 A.D. And Plains village centers, rendezvous points, waterways, and horse trails continued to function as such well into the 1830s.²⁵

No tribe or band lived in an economic vacuum. All participated in regional networks with hubs or nodes of primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of importance in the acquisition, production, and transference of commodities. We need not debate the level of development for this system by such Eurocentric nomenclature as central marketplace versus itinerant trader/barter-exchange economies; nor is it necessary to discuss levels of interdependency in terms of the differences between modern and traditional societies²⁶ to accept the fact that a Network System, very identifiable and understandable to capitalist trading cultures did exist. To label this part of a "world system" goes beyond the North American context of protohistoric and early historic networks.²⁷ At first, native modes of distribution sufficed for European and Indian alike. By the 1820s the system was revamped to accommodate new priorities for various trading cultures.

Those Euroamericans who succeeded best in the accumulation of extractive commodities took advantage of the preexisting modes of production and distribution they witnessed on the Plains which were centered at the family and band levels of socio-economic organization.²⁸ Much of the financial and diplomatic success of the American Fur Company's western operations is explained by this.

That success did not come easily. By the time A.F.C. traders unpacked their outfits on the middle stretches of the Missouri in the early 1820s, the Mandan and Hidatsa, and possibly other tribes, had been engaged in trade with whites for a century or so. Although the chronology of this traffic in and out of Missouri River trade centers as well as the extent of Mandan/Hidatsa trading caravans is not entirely clear, contact at York Fort by large parties of Missouri River Indians in canoes is documented as early as 1715.²⁹ By the 1790s, the northern Plains trade nexus had expanded whereby the Mandans and Hidatsas served as hosts to Brandon House-based H.B.C. traders, while the Arikara to their south selectively opened their lodges to Saint-Louis based French and Spanish traders.³⁰ Yet, from the late eighteenth century to the mid 1820s, British, French, Spanish, Metis, and American traders did not control and certainly did not dominate Missouri River and Plains trade. If anything, the scenario parallels that of the Lower Saskatchewan as analyzed by Paul Thistle

for the period up to 1774. The Western Woods Cree, writes Thistle, "... were in fact in firm control of the relationship in economic, political, social and strategic terms. The term dependence should be used to describe the position of Europeans--not Indians--since it was the Europeans who relied most heavily on their Cree trading partners during the Early Fur Trade Era."³¹

Thistle followed the conceptual framework of Charles Bishop and Arthur Ray³² in testing dependency up to 1840 and concluded that the Cree never became dependent on the H.B.C. Rather than turning to trapping furs as a primary industry, they were able to maintain a symbiotic relationship with white traders, all-the-while keeping their subsistence options open to a variety of traditional, as well as new strategies. At no time did the Woods Cree become dependent on H.B.C. trading posts as a substitute for the old ways of maintaining families and bands.³³

Bishop and Ray's 1976 discussion provides a useful schema. Their categories for the historic era in the Central Subarctic are worth cataloguing in that they provide a common denominator for testing this key question in many culture areas, including the Plains. Beyond the protohistoric, they defined an "Early Fur Trade Era" as characterized by earliest visitations of Europeans to Indian settlement or territories, ending, in their case, around 1763. A "Competitive Trade Era" followed and lasted until 1821, during which numerous competing trading centers were built and game was slaughtered with unbridled zeal. The years from 1821 to 1890 were those of "Trading Post Dependency" wherein trapping became the basic subsistence pattern necessary to survival for native hunters caught in the larger net of European and North American economic systems. Trapping continued into the "Era of Early Government Influence" from 1890-1945, but living conditions improved through private and public programs. After World War II, Bishop and Ray see a "Modern Era" identified with government-established villages. While trapping, hunting, and fishing have continued, increased emphasis in the Modern Era has been on government subsidies for income.³⁴

On the Plains, a "competitive fur trade era" began in the eighteenth century and intensified in the first three decades of the nineteenth century after American acquisition of the Louisiana Territory. Dozens of trading centers were constructed between 1807 and the beginning of large-scale government intervention in tribal affairs in the 1850s. From the 1830s to the near extermination of the American bison in the 1880s, robes eclipsed furs and skins in quantity and value on the Plains. Thus, the key question for us becomes: when, if ever, did Plains peoples lose options of economic independence before reservation days? Was there a "Trading Post Dependency" phase in A.F.C.-Northern Plains relations comparable to that found by Bishop and Ray in H.B.C.-Central Subarctic Indian relations?

My research in American Fur Company Papers and the financial records and correspondence of Western Department personnel based out of Saint Louis is not at the stage whereby I can quantify producer/provisioner/consumer relationships by band, post, or district. Some of the impressions that have been generated out of this initial research, posited here as hypotheses, include the following.

It is clear that the Astor/Crooks and Chouteau/McKenzie concerns were certainly interested in establishing an iron grip on the Indian trade wherever the A.F.C. determined to establish spheres of influence. To this end, they brought nineteenth-century capitalist ideology into Indian country and used various tactics from lobbying Congress and Indian agents for special legislation

and favors, to loss-leader retail price-structures for merchandise, to expensive mergers, to monopolization of steamboat transportation after 1833 in order to outmaneuver opposition. John Sunder is correct when he states that like the H.B.C., the A.F.C. "believed in the same business tactics: avoid the cost of exploration, forego immediate profit for distant gain, and plan for the long haul."³⁵

In the letters between Crooks, Chouteau, and their field managers, one finds greater fear of white competitors than with the need to lure Indians into the trade shop and to keep them coming back. Those worries were left to the servants operating at the level of factors, clerks, and traders. What especially troubled Chouteau and the leading fur barons of Saint Louis was servant disloyalty, defection, desertion or independence.³⁶ The Chouteaus and many of their business associates and partners owned black slaves, and as such had little use for democracy at home or at the most remote wintering camps of their engages. Power and success meant controlling as many variables as possible without excessive largess or overhead.³⁷

Keys to that control included reliance on Indian hunters and processors, competitive but not generous salaries of engaged personnel, loyalty and competence of middle and upper-tier employees, effective diplomacy with native band leaders, maintenance of trade shops and packsaddles full of high quality merchandise for Indian customers, and elimination or absorption of white competition.

Ranking these factors according to their relative importance in A.F.C. official policy is highly subjective. While company owners were not overly concerned about individual Indians as people, they were very sensitive to the possibilities of losing Indian producers and consumers. And they went to great effort and, at times, expense, to insure quality of merchandise and to meet Indian preferences. Blankets provide a case in point. Both the New York and Saint Louis offices of A.F.C. operations contain frequent correspondence concerning blankets for the Indian trade. Ramsay Crooks often undertook the task of educating European manufacturers on the absolute necessity of producing superior woollens. Writing to one major supplier in 1836 he lectured:

...uniformity in our goods is of much importance. The Blankets of the different sizes should be of the same dimensions, weight, quality, & finish, as with every thing else--Our Indians do not use many articles, but of the few they do require, they are capital judges--The person who has no other protection against the rigours of a northern winter than a single Blanket becomes fully competent to decide whether the article does or does not impart the requisite degree of warmth.³⁸

Throughout the records of the middle- and upper Missouri outfits traders commented on Indians as shrewd buyers who knew how to take advantage of competition between the A.F.C. and the many independents and smaller concerns. The key was manipulation of the credit system and the threat of taking skins elsewhere. The pattern one sees at the level of wintering houses and among those traders living in Indian villages is similar to that argued by Arthur Ray for the Cree and Assiniboine in his "Indians as Consumers in the Eighteenth Century" where white competition worked to Indian hunters' advantage.³⁹

The correspondence between Joseph Robidoux and Pierre Chouteau, Jr. is especially illuminating of the extent to which Plains hunters could establish

their own rules while animals were plentiful and white competition stiff. Recently transferred from the Oto Outfit to trade among the loways at the Black Snake Hills post in 1831, Robidoux complained to Chouteau:

I have come out of Purgatory to enter Hell, this spoiled wilderness where you have nested me. For the last 15 days I have been besieged in a cellar by these rascals asking for credits; the carbines and guns are all gone--now they demand cloth and blankets. It is easy for me to refuse them. But I would not like to displease-- they have always been used to receiving these things--I see it in the credit books...the worst thing is that I cannot sell them dearly enough; the price is \$25 for carbines, 15 for guns, 6 for 3-point blankets, \$5 for 2 1/2 and 5 for cloth...And you see that at this price there is no profit...

It is not like it was with my Otos & Panis [Pawnees]--where I sold at double the prices.⁴⁰

Robidoux could neither dictate prices nor terms from his small, vulnerable cabin surrounded by hundreds of loway lodges. Thus, the geographical as well as the ethnohistorical context of such relations thus becomes critical for the American, as well as the Canadian trade.

David Wishart's geographical analysis of A.F.C. operations makes clear,⁴¹ as do the letters and post ledgers themselves, that successful trade among Plains peoples depended on acquiring or building, maintaining, and supplying trading centers deep within native territory.⁴² Sending white or Metis trappers into Indian country, as some entrepreneurs such as William Ashley attempted, was unacceptable to producers and middlemen alike. The A.F.C. experimented briefly with hiring whites to replace native hunters, but the cost in human life and the loss of Indian clients soon led to a change in policy. Writing in 1832 from the mouth of the Yellowstone River, frontier artist George Catlin observed:

...the American Fur Company, with an unconquerable spirit of trade and enterprise, has pushed its establishments into their country; and the numerous parties of trappers are tracing up their streams and rivers, rapidly destroying the beavers which dwell in them. The Blackfeet have repeatedly informed the Traders of the Company that if their men persisted in trapping beavers in their country, they should kill them whenever they met them. They have executed their threats in many instances, and the Company lose some fifteen or twenty men annually...The Blackfeet, therefore, having been less traded with and less seen by white people than most of the other tribes, are more imperfectly understood;...⁴³

The following year, William B. Astor reached the wise conclusion that the A.F.C. should

...confine ourselves as soon as circumstances will permit to the trade with the Indians...and give up hunting as a part of our Upper Missouri business--The Indians are now too well aware of the value of the furred animals in their country to allow us to hunt them peaceably; and I apprehend a loss of our trade with the Blackfeet will be a natural consequence of our coming into collision with them as we must do if we persevere in the present system of trapping.⁴⁴

As was characteristic of the competitive trade era in the Subarctic, posts became the acceptable compromise for all concerned.⁴⁵ The A.F.C. excelled in locating their posts at the right place at propitious times. In August of 1833, two years after the A.F.C. had successfully negotiated with the Blackfeet the privilege of building a post in the heart of their country, Maximilian, Prince of Wied wrote of this great concession: "[i]n this manner the Fur Company continues to advance, and firmly establishes itself among nations that are but little known, where the fur trade is still profitable."⁴⁶ That the A.F.C. anchored its personnel firmly where furs and robes were to be had with a degree of pragmatic zeal is fact; that they held the upper hand between themselves and robe producing Indians from the beginning to the end of the post era is questionable. Letters from Fort McKenzie a year after Maximilian's entry indicate that the A.F.C. needed more than good strategy and a defensible fort to survive in Blackfeet country. James Kipp, the builder of the post reported to McKenzie:

I found the people at the Fort in a starving condition, living upon cherries, fortunately however the peigans [sic.] arrived a few days afterwards with meat. The Peigans have now finished their Beaver Trade, and instead of being better as I had reason to believe from reports it would prove, in reality, it is much less than what was procured by them last year. It is really discouraging and not only so for they are ten times as numerous as the first year they visited us and are as equally troublesome as they are expensive. I was compelled to cloth [sic] fourteen chiefs independently of the Liquor, Tobacco & Ammunition with which I presented them and all I received during the whole Trade was seven packs of Beaver-just half the quantity last year they procured.⁴⁷

Kipp blamed his poor returns on past A.F.C. policy, explaining that the Indians "...have been in the habit of receiving entirely too much pay for nothing..." and he reported to his superior at Fort Union his threat to remove the fort and all future presents including "Chiefs Coats and Hats with Feathers."⁴⁸

But, presents continued to flow into Blackfeet country which soon became one the most profitable of all A.F.C. districts with over 1,000 packs of robes and numerous other furs and skins flowing into the New York warehouse annually from this outpost. Despite the high plains smallpox epidemic of 1837, which halved the population of the Plains, the robe trade prospered.⁴⁹ By 1841, the fort boasted sending 21,000 robes to market, approximately one-fifth of the company's total production, and was one of the linchpins in the company's success on the Upper Missouri. Within two years, however, the vicissitudes of trading behind the tenuous walls of a log fort in hostile country took a turn for the worse when a pig and a black company servant were killed by a war party that had been denied admittance into Ft. McKenzie. The following month, post managers Francis Chardon and Alexander Harvey got even by firing a cannon into another Blackfeet trading party as it entered the fort's gate. Ten or more died and many more were wounded, among them women and children. The dead and wounded--some thirty in all--were scalped in retaliation. Chardon was soon transferred, the post abandoned and burnt, and not until Alexander Culbertson through his Blood wife negotiated a new truce could A.F.C. traders move in and out of Blackfeet country.⁵⁰

Loss of control in situations such as that at Fort McKenzie during the winter of 1844 highlight the underlying tensions at the western A.F.C. posts. From the Indian point of view, at least on the Upper Missouri and the western plains, where the fur and robe trades were of relatively brief durations, it is doubtful that many native leaders looked back to a "Golden Age" of itinerant French or British traders such as has been suggested by Preston Holder for the Arikara and village Indians on the Missouri before the 1820s.⁵¹

Rather, trading posts were regarded by Plains peoples as beneficial only so long as white competition provided advantage, or exceptional rapport with post managers and traders was maintained. While the large posts, especially Fort Union, Fort Pierre, Fort Clark, and Fort Laramie functioned variously as general mercantile stores, banks, hospitals and welfare centers, and regional social hubs, and thus served important, perhaps even essential functions for some native hunting groups,⁵² there is little in the records to suggest those Indians who frequented the more numerous smaller posts and wintering houses were dependent on the A.F.C.'s presence.⁵³

This is not to imply that the A.F.C. trade had no long term effects on Plains society. It was, after all, A.F.C. traders who hand delivered the greatest quantity of manufactured goods to Indian consumers in the region and in so doing, elaborated Plains material culture markedly. An average of \$100,000 in goods per year for the period, 1815-1830 were estimated by Indian agent John Dougherty in 1832 as a rough valuation for the Saint Louis-based fur trade.⁵⁴ Over a decade later, Chouteau and Company's valuation in goods at "original cost" was reported to Congress as \$120,000 scattered among the various posts.⁵⁵ An order for "Sundry Merchandise" for the trade at Fort Union during the 1834-1835 season is representative of the scale of importation in manufactured goods during the peak years of the robe trade. That one order included: fifty gross of Indian awls, 1600 pounds in beads of various colors and sizes, 40 gross yellow coat buttons, 6 gross yellow vest buttons, 20 dozen boxwood combs, 250 pounds of bells, 1500 inches of wampum hair pipe, 200 flannel shirts, 200 fancy calico shirts, 12 gross gunworms, 200 North West guns, 4,000 pounds bar iron, 20 nests of Japan kettles, 400 dozen common scalping knives, 300 dozen "war scalping" knives, 50 dozen "Wilson's butcher knives--large & good," 160 dozen "Britannia" looking glasses of various sizes, 4,000 pounds sugar, 250 pounds of tea, and 400 pounds of vermillion. These goods supplemented the "spring, 1833 order" which surpassed the above in quantity and included 1,350 pairs of assorted blankets.⁵⁶ These and thousands of other items were traded at Fort Union that lucrative season for 1970 packs of robes, 4100 pounds of beaver, 4000 fox skins, and 9000 muskrats.⁵⁷ Clearly this was not incidental commodity exchange.

Nor was the traffic in liquor--a familiar subject to all A.F.C. personnel--both those in favor and those opposed to its use in the Indian trade. Theoretically prohibited except for use by white personnel and for "medicinal reasons" after 1831, it was often from A.F.C. kegs--legally and illegally--that many Indian people were introduced to alcohol. Some handled it well; others did not. Some demanded it; others rejected it. Undeniably, A.F.C. officers attempted to influence all levels of government regulation and inspection and made a point of courting special favors among politicians and bureaucrats, including special exemptions for transshipment of liquor. The ethical, logistical, and financial considerations in an absolute ban on booze in trade zones were multidimensional and in no small way complicated by the presence of British traders and American independent whiskey peddlers. Writing from Washington

City in 1833, Ramsay Crooks reported his frustrations and his failure to secure repeal of the prohibition statute in Indian country, highlighting the dilemma facing the company:

...it was wholly impossible to affect the least modification as regards the use of ardent spirits in the Indian Country--The law of last July excludes it entirely under any, and every pretence whatever; and the Government is determined to carry the meaning of the Act into the most complete effect. I explained to Gov. Cass that our sole and only wish for a partial supply was to enable us to cope with our Hudson's Bay opponents at our new Posts above the Mandans, relinquishing it voluntarily every where else as advantageous to both the Natives and ourselves, when we were not exposed to the decided injury our trade would sustain by our being deprived of it in competition with our Northern adversaries, who could command any quantity they pleased.⁵⁸

Even the powerful American Fur Company could not bend the liquor laws to match the Bay Company. In desperation, Kenneth McKenzie set up a distillery at Fort Union claiming in correspondence with Crooks "liquor I must have or quit any pretensions to trade at this post, especially while our opponents can get any quantity passed up the Missouri or introduce it as they have done by another route."⁵⁹ Rival traders discovered and reported Fort Union's "strong waters," forcing the A.F.C. to resort to smuggling.⁶⁰

Throughout the 1830s while some A.F.C. traders complained that their trade suffered when liquor was in short supply, Chouteau was coming to a different conclusion about the necessity of a wet trade. By 1841, he was convinced that prohibition, if strictly enforced, could ensure A.F.C. hegemony of certain spheres of trade by driving out competition, all-the-while keeping Indian hunters and their families active in robe production. Supporters in Washington agreed and beginning in March of 1842 the War Department and the Indian Office launched a systematic campaign to clamp down on the liquor trade. The deck was stacked in the A.F.C.'s favor with the appointment of Andrew Drips, former A.F.C. trader, as special Indian Agent and inspector. Within three years Drips reported that "illicit whiskey has entirely disappeared from the Upper Missouri country."⁶¹ And so had Chouteau's competition. However, the experiment proved ephemeral. In 1846 Drips was removed after lawsuits were brought by various opponents charging duplicity and A.F.C. violations of the very laws Chouteau lobbied to secure. As Janet Lecompte has written, by the next season (1847), "all was back to normal--opposition traders everywhere and the Indian country awash in alcohol."⁶²

The long term impact of the trade in alcohol is difficult to assess. David D. Mitchell claimed in 1841 that more than one hundred Indians had killed each other in drunken brawls in Sioux country alone during the previous year and he feared rising violence and feuds would decrease hunting and bring on starvation if liquor tightened its grip on Sioux warriors.⁶³ Most European travelers echoed these concerns, often complaining that accessibility and use of liquor produced what one scholar has described as "a fearful drunkenness" among the Plains tribes.⁶⁴ Fur men and Indian traders had special reasons for underscoring the negative effects of the whiskey trade, yet it is interesting that the problem of drunken behavior seldom surfaces in letters and post journals as a major cause of population loss or cultural demise. Rather, epidemic disease and increased inter-tribal violence stand out as the culprits in taking lives among Indians.⁶⁵

These same chroniclers were also aware of the changes the "new" trade wrought on Indian kinship and social networks, especially changes affecting native women. Through intermarriage with white and Metis traders, many Plains Indian women became attached as brokers between their people and the white trader society changing forever the genetic, and to a degree, the cultural landscape of the plains. These company wives and "mothers of the mixed bloods," figured prominently in and around posts and are shown great respect in company correspondence and in travelers' accounts.⁶⁶ Examples here include Deer Little Woman, the Assiniboiné wife of trader Edwin T. Denig, and Medicine Snake Woman, Blood Indian wife of Alexander Culbertson--exceptional women of status and power. The other native women, those many nameless "post squaws," surface occasionally in the sources, but it is unclear whether these women were attached to specific husbands or were laborer/concubines taken in through trade or employed for the innumerable tasks necessary to run a post.⁶⁷ The artist John James Audubon mentioned "our squaws" in reference to Assiniboiné women at Fort Union during his extended vacation there in 1843 while Swiss artist Rudolph Kurz commented in an 1850 journal entry on the employment by the company of Indian women who carried buffalo robe packs weighing 100 pounds.⁶⁸ Several years later trader Henry Boller described Fort Union as "full of men, & their squaws, & in addition to this there are between 25 & 30 squaws ready & willing to be 'married'...the mothers & sisters of other squaws."⁶⁹

The image of Indian women as "beasts of burden" and "sexually permissive squaws" has been analyzed by Katherine Weist and Rayna Green respectively.⁷⁰ Weist has presented an alternative explanation for understanding native women's labor on the Plains, arguing that it was Indian women--however willingly or begrudgingly--who did most of the intensive labor in the fur trade, not their lovers, husbands, or employers. Women received, dried, stored, and distributed meat brought in from the hunt; they also planted, hoed, watered, harvested, and cached crops among the village Indians of the Upper Missouri and Platte. And, of paramount importance for us in understanding the economics of dependency, they fleshed, scraped, pegged, and dressed every one of those hundreds of thousands of "Indian handled" robes and furs that were tallied in Saint Louis and New York.⁷¹

To produce more hides and robes all-the-while preparing food and clothing in the lodge and raising a family, a northern Plains wife needed help. She got it through her husband's multiple marriages, normally with her younger sisters. Nearly every eyewitness of Indian camp life in the period from 1830 to 1870 noticed polygynous households and none contradicted A.F.C. trader Edwin Denig's general observation that "...inasmuch as women are of great advantage to Indians by their labor, a plurality of wives is required by a good hunter."⁷² While scholars may quibble with Denig's cavalier choice of the verb, required, rather than "desired," we are in near-unison in seeing this aspect of Plains kinship as accelerated in practice and heightened in importance due to the new material economy of the hide trade.⁷³

Alan Klein has argued that discussions of the robe trade on the northern plains ought to go beyond consensus on the proliferation of polygynous households and increased workload imposed on native women. In a neo-Marxist framework, Klein would have us acknowledge changes in gender roles as a second test beyond increases in sororal polygamy. His research on the Teton Dakota, Assiniboiné, Gros Ventre, and Blackfoot led him to conclude women lost

political and economic position and power at the hands of Indian males as a direct result of the new trade economy. He writes:

...the introduction of new production factors, orientations to subsistence and distributional models, and a new basis of wealth brought changes in almost every Plains institution. The new mode of production favored men over women, young over old, the individual over the group. Economic strategies such as trading, raiding, individualized hunting, and 'smoking' emphasized individual males and privately held rights in property. The buffalo hide trade also lifted the economic ceiling which had governed Plains nomadic production. The prosperity which followed solved old problems such as subsistence shortages, but created new ones: provisioning people who no longer had an active role in crucial economic spheres. The emerging "have-nots" became dependents thereby underwriting the status of wealthier members.⁷⁴

I am not prepared here to agree or disagree with Klein. He has forced us to add new dimensions to the older questions. I am willing to suggest that the language of white trader literature distinguished very carefully the "haves" and the "have-nots" in the context of those with, those without robes to trade and those desirous of acquiring certain material items possessed by other trading cultures, including whites.

This brings us back to the question anthropologists such as Clark Wissler and Robert Lowie first raised and later ethnohistorians, especially John C. Ewers have been testing for years.⁷⁵ Is it really possible to determine degrees of culture change, much less dependency, by the volume and distribution of specific trade items including horses, guns, wool blankets, and the myriad of other Euroamerican objects including the ubiquitous keg of brandy?

However we assess relative dependency of Indians on Whites; Whites on Indians during the active years of the fur and robe trades, for the Plains it is clear that once the buffalo were gone, ecological disruption reduced subsistence strategies to a handful of difficult, and ultimately unfavorable choices for Plains hunters. The process was evident from the 1850s on, reached the crisis level in the 1860s--just as the American Fur Company began shutting down many of its operations--and culminated in the various wars of resistance to White encroachment and domination in the 1870s.⁷⁶ Charles Larpenteur, who knew many of these people so well was probably right: hunger and pride, not agents or traders or sutlers forced a confrontation and someone had to "yield."⁷⁷

On the eve of the Plains Indian Wars, beginning with the Grattan Affair in 1854, there is some evidence to suggest Plains hunters had pains of conscience in directing arrows away from buffalo, white trappers, and each other toward white-owned livestock, settlers trespassing on Indian lands in violation of treaties, and the "Long Knives" in blue. At a council with the Sioux at Fort Pierre in 1856, a Yankton leader known to whites as The Man That is Struck by the Ree was quoted to have said to General Harney upon being confronted with killing cows and stealing horses:

I have always done what the father here (Colonel Vaughan) has told me. It is very hard, when a man has only one thing, to give more than he has got.

I can't make horses out of the ground. If you are not satisfied, do with me what you please; take my body and sell me--do what you please.⁷⁸

Even were we to accept Man That is Struck's words as more than polite cynicism, most Plains leaders were not apologetic about reserving sovereignty and pride, even if their resources were fast disappearing. Writing from Fort Laramie, one Indian agent reported, "The great majority of the Indians in this agency have no respect for the government; they think Uncle Sam is a weak old fellow, and could be easily overcome, and they have good reasons for coming to that conclusion."⁷⁹ In hindsight, we know that many still believed this on that fateful day in June, some twenty-two years later at Little Big Horn.

END NOTES

1. "David D. Mitchell to T. Hartley Crawford, St. Louis, September 12, 1842," in Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1842, House Executive Document no. 2, serial 418, p. 426.
2. For a short biography of Mitchell's success in the American Fur Company see Ray H. Mattison, "David Dawson Mitchell," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 10 vols. (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1965), 2:241-46.
3. "Mitchell to Crawford," op. cit., p. 427.
4. "D. D. Mitchell to L. Lea, Saint Louis, November 11, 1851," in Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1851, House Executive Document no. 2, serial 636, pp. 289-90.
5. Robert A. Trennert, Alternative to Extinction: Federal Indian Policy and the Beginnings of the Reservation System, 1846-1851 (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1975), p. 193.
6. "Treaty of Fort Laramie, Fort Laramie, September 17, 1851," reprinted in The American Indian and the United States: A Documentary History, ed. Wilcomb E. Washburn (Westport, Ct.: Greenwood, 1979), 4:2477-80.
7. George Hyde understood this well in his analysis of the treaty in Red Cloud's Folk: A History of the Oglala Sioux Indians (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1937), esp. pp. 65-71. The best contextual analysis of the "meaning" of treaty-making from Plains cultural viewpoints is Raymond J. DeMallie, "American Indian Treaty Making: Motives and Meanings," American Indian Journal 3 (January 1977): 2-10 and his "Touching the Pen: Plains Indian Treaty Councils in Ethnohistorical Perspective," in Ethnicity on the Great Plains, ed. Frederick C. Luebke, pp. 38-53 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980).
8. Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J., Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, S.J., 1801-1873, ed. Hiram Martin Chittenden and Alfred Talbot Richardson, 4 vols. (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1905), 2:684.
9. Charles Larpenteur, Forty Years a Fur Trader on the Upper Missouri. The Personal Narrative of Charles Larpenteur, 1833-1872, ed. Elliott Coues, 2 vols. (New York: Francis P. Harper, 1898), 2:418-23, at 419.
The best analysis of this subject is Robert A. Trennert, "The Fur Trader as Indian Administrator: Conflict of Interest or Wise Policy?" South Dakota History 5(1974):1-19.
10. Larpenteur, Forty Years a Fur Trader, 2:422. For a brief biography of Larpenteur see Louis Pfaller, O.S.B., "Charles Larpenteur," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 1:295-311.
11. The best discussions of the A.F.C. in overviews of the fur trade are Hiram M. Chittenden, The American Fur Trade of the Far West (New York: Francis Harper, 1902), Vol. 1, Part 2, Sections 8-14, 19-23; LeRoy R. Hafen's "A Brief

History of the Fur Trade of the Far West," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 10 vols. (Glendale: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1965-1972), 1:46-51, 105-115, 161-76; and, Paul Chrisler Phillips, with J. W. Smurr, The Fur Trade (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), Vol. 2, chapters 40-41, 45, 46, 49; and, John E. Sunder, The Fur Trade of the Upper Missouri, 1840-1865 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965).

12. Grace Lee Nute, "The Papers of the American Fur Company: A Brief Estimate of their Significance," American Historical Review 32 (April 1927), reprinted as Part 1, pp. 519-38 of Grace Lee Nute, ed., and comp., Calendar of the American Fur Company Papers, Part 1: 1831-1840; Part 2: 1841-1849, published as Vols. 2-3, Annual Report of the American Historical Association, 1944 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1945).

13. For an excellent discussion of these elaborate business arrangements see Janet Lecompte, "Pierre Chouteau, Jr.," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade of the Far West, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 9:92-123.

14. Details of Crooks' role in the fur trade are found in Harvey L. Carter, "Ramsay Crooks," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 9:125-131; J. Ward Ruckman, "Ramsay Crooks and the Fur Trade of the Northwest," Minnesota History 7 (March 1926), pp. 18-31; and, David Lavender, The Fist in the Wilderness (New York: Doubleday, 1964).

15. On the breakup of the Chouteau family interests on the upper Missouri see Sunder, Fur Trade on the Upper Missouri, pp. 242-65.

16. Hiram Martin Chittenden, The American Fur Trade of the Far West, 3 Vols. (New York: Francis Harper, 1902). This is a point I make in my "Preface" to a new edition of the above, Vol. 2, pp. xi-xxiii (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986).

17. Chittenden, American Fur Trade of the Far West, Vol. 1, especially part 1 and part 2, sections 19-23.

18. Chittenden, American Fur Trade of the Far West, Vol. 1, especially chapters 6, 15, and 16.

19. Most of the "American Fur Company Papers" are in the possession of the New York Historical Society. They were microfilmed in 1950-1951 in 37 reels. Grace Nute described 18,181 items for the period 1831-1849 in her Calendar. Many other archival collections contain other segments of the A.F.C. Papers.

The papers of Pierre, Chouteau, Jr. and many of his associates are in the manuscript collections of the Missouri Historical Society in Saint Louis, hereafter referred to as Chouteau Collection unless designated otherwise. The latter consists of sixty boxes, 1752-1925. Additional financial and personnel matters are found in various formats and collections, designated by the M.H.S. as "Fur Trade Ledgers" and available on microfilm, 22 reels.

20. Especially important studies of the effects of trade on specific Plains peoples include Oscar Lewis, The Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture with Special Reference to the Role of the Fur Trade. Monographs of

the American Ethnological Society 6 (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1942); Joseph Jablow, The Cheyenne in Plains Indian Trade Relations, 1795-1840. Monographs of the American Ethnological Society 19 (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1950); John C. Ewers, The Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture. Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 159 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955; and, Ewers, The Blackfeet: Raiders on the Northwestern Plains (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958).

21. Richard White, The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p. xix.

22. The work of Fred Eggan and his students is especially important in this cross-cultural, broad culture area conceptual approach. For an assessment of Eggan's approach see E. Adamson Hoebel, "The Influence of Plains Ethnography on the Development of Anthropological Theory," pp. 16-22 in Anthropology on the Great Plains, ed. Wood and Liberty.

The challenge to ethnohistorians to broaden coverage of the Plains Culture Area is set forth by Mildred Mott Wedel and Raymond J. DeMallie in "The Ethnohistorical Approach in Plains Area Studies," pp. 110-28 in Anthropology on the Great Plains, ed. Wood and Liberty.

23. The Plains has not benefitted from indepth analysis comparable to Arthur J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade: Their Role as Hunters, Trappers, and Middlemen in the Lands Southwest of Hudson Bay, 1660-1870 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974) or Arthur J. Ray and Donald Freeman, 'Give Us Good Measure': An Economic Analysis of Relations between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company before 1763 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978). For an excellent review of the relative sophistication of studies focusing on the Canadian trade see Jacqueline Peterson and John Anfinson, "The Indian and the Fur Trade," in Scholars and the Indian Experience: Critical Reviews of Recent Writing in the Social Sciences, ed. W. R. Swagerty (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), pp. 223-57.

24. The original concept of Plains trade centers was formulated by John C. Ewers, "The Indian Trade of the Upper Missouri before Lewis and Clark: An Interpretation," Missouri Historical Society Bulletin 10(1954):429-46. Expansion of centers into Middle Missouri and Pacific-Plateau networks was postulated by W. Raymond Wood, "Contrastive Patterns of Native North American Trade Systems," in For the Chief: Essays in Honor of Luther S. Cressman, ed. Fred W. Voget and Robert L. Stephenson. University of Oregon Anthropological Papers 4(1972):153-69; Wood, "Plains Trade in Prehistoric and Protohistoric Intertribal Relations," in Anthropology on the Great Plains, ed. W. Raymond Wood and Margot Liberty, pp. 98-109 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980).

I have expanded on this in "Indian Trade of the Trans-Mississippi West to 1870," in Indian-White Relations, ed. Wilcomb E. Washburn, Vol. 4 of Handbook of North American Indians, gen. ed. William C. Sturtevant (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, in press).

The concept of frontier Gateway Communities on the periphery of "core" areas is explored for Mexico by Kenneth G. Hirth, "Interregional Trade and the Formation of Prehistoric Gateway Communities." American Antiquity 43 (January

1978):35-45. On the significance of Middle Missouri River horticultural villages as central places with middlemen trader clientele see Preston Holder, The Hoe and the Horse on the Plains: A Study of Cultural Development among North American Indians (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970); Roy W. Meyer, The Village Indians of the Upper Missouri: The Mandans, Hidatsas, and Arikaras (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977); and, Charles E. Orser, Jr., "Trade Good Flow in Arikara Villages: Expanding Ray's 'Middleman Hypothesis.'" Plains Anthropologist 29(103) (1984):1-12.

25. These ideas are explored in W. Raymond Wood and Thomas D. Thiessen, ed., The Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains: Canadian Traders Among the Mandan and Hidatsa Indians, 1738-1818; the Narratives of John Macdonell, David Thompson, Francois-Antoine Laroque, and Charles McKenzie (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985), especially pp. 3-74.

26. Use of "traditional" versus "modern" markets is not as relevant for understanding the Indian trade as is the concept of networks. For conventional discussion of this topic see Cyril S. Belshaw, Traditional Exchange and Modern Markets (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1965).

27. The application of the aforementioned concepts of "trade centers" and "networks" as analyzed by Ewers and Wood are much more applicable to the protohistoric Plains than World Systems approaches by Braudel and Wallerstein. There are many components of the North American protohistoric that invite comparison with Central Place Theory and Network Systems Theory but no one has thoroughly studied the possibilities.

28. I have been especially influenced in my thinking on "Tribal Economics" and the "Familial Mode of Production" by Marshall Sahlins, The Tribesmen (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1968), esp. chapter 5.

29. Arthur S. Morton, in A History of the Canadian West to 1870-1871; being a History of Rupert's Land (the Hudson's Bay Company's Territory) and of the North-West Territory (including the Pacific Slope) (Toronto: T. Nelson and Sons, 1939); 2nd ed., ed. Lewis G. Thomas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press in cooperation with the University of Saskatchewan, 1973) first presented this thesis. Other scholars, especially Arthur J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade, pp. 53-63 and Wood and Thiesen, ed., Early Fur Trade on the Northern Plains, pp. 18-20 have supported Morton and have offered specific identification of native trade groups.

30. David A Stewart, Early Assiniboine Trading Posts of the Souris-Mouth Group: 1785-1832. Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba No. 5 (n.s.); John A. Alwin, "Pelts, Provisions & Perceptions: The Hudson's Bay Company Mandan Indian Trade, 1795-1812," Montana: The Magazine of Western History 29 (July 1979):16-27.

31. Paul C. Thistle, Indian-European Trade Relations in the Lower Saskatchewan River Region to 1840 (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1986), p. 50.

32. Charles A. Bishop and Arthur J. Ray, "Ethnohistorical Research in the

Central Subarctic: Some Conceptual and Methodological Problems," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology 6, No. 1 (1976):116-44.

33. Thistle, Indian-European Trade Relations, pp. 93-94.

34. Bishop and Ray, "Ethnohistoric Research in the Central Subarctic," pp. 133-36.

35. Sunder, Fur Trade on the Upper Missouri, p. 11.

36. I base this conclusion on reading the complete correspondence files of Pierre Chouteau, Jr. in the Chouteau Collection, Missouri Historical Society.

37. On the culture into which Chouteau and his associates were born see William E. Foley and C. David Rice, The First Chouteaus: River Barons of Early St. Louis (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1983). In addition to the Chouteaus, other slave-owning families in partnership with Chouteau included John P. Sarpy and Bernard Pratte, both of whom purchased slaves at the estate auction of August Chouteau upon his death in 1830. "Estate Sale of Slaves, Sept. 15, 1830," Chouteau Collection, Box 24. And, John F. A. Sanford, who was made a partner in the company in 1838 and subsequently became the defendant in the famous case, Dred Scott versus Sanford (1857). See Janet Lecompte, "John F.A. Sanford," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade, ed. Leroy R. Hafen, 9:351-59.

38. "Ramsay Crooks to Crafts and Stell, Manchester, England, March 15, 1836," A.F.C. Papers, Letterbook 2:464-65.

39. Arthur J. Ray, "Indians as Consumers in the Eighteenth Century," pp. 255-71 in Old Trails and New Directions: Papers of the Third North American Fur Trade Conference, eds., Carol M. Judd and Arthur J. Ray (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980).

40. "Joseph Robidoux to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., Black Snake Hills, 8 October, 1831," translation by Mrs. Max Meyer, Chouteau Collection, Box 26.

41. David J. Wishart, The Fur Trade of the American West, 1807-1840: A Geographical Synthesis (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1979), chapters 1-3.

42. The significance of the American Fur Company trading post as an institution is clearly revealed in the "Fort Union Letterbook," Chouteau Collection, Box 31; and in the published accounts by Larpenteur, Forty Years a Fur Trader and Francis A. Chardon, Chardon's Journal at Fort Clark, 1834-1839, ed. Annie Heloise Abel (Pierre, S.D.: Department of History, State of South Dakota, 1932). Also see Erwin N. Thompson, Fort Union Trading Post: Fur Trade Empire on the Upper Missouri (Medora, N.D.: Theodore Roosevelt Nature and History Association, 1986).

43. George Catlin, Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of North American Indians, 2 vols. (London, 1844; reprinted, New York: Dover Publications, 1973), 1:51-52.

44. "William B. Astor to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., 17 April, 1833," Chouteau Collection, Box 29, p. 1.
45. Wishart, Fur Trade of the American West, esp. pp. 53-74.
46. Maximilian, Prince of Wied, Travels in the Interior of North America, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites, vol. 23 of Early Western Travels, 1748-1846 (Cleveland: Arthur H. Clark, 1906), p. 84.
47. "James Kipp to Kenneth McKenzie, Fort McMcKenzie, September 5, 1834," Chouteau Collection, Box 33, Missouri Historical Society, p. 1.
48. Ibid., p. 2.

49. The best discussion of disease, especially smallpox on the Plains across time is Francis Haines, The Plains Indians (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1976), chapters 9 and 12. For specific analysis of the spread of the 1837 epidemic see Clyde C. Dollar, "The High Plains Smallpox Epidemic of 1837-1838," Western Historical Quarterly 8 (January 1977):15-38. Cultural change as a result of epidemics has been analyzed by several scholars, including John F. Taylor, "Sociocultural Effects of Epidemics on the Northern Plains, 1734-1850," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology 7(4) (1977):55-81, who observes:

The higher mortality rate of males in polygynous families and the needs of the survivors of these large families, coupled with the loss of material goods through sacrifice and abandonment during epidemics, created a need among Native Americans for superior Euroamerican technology. Possibly related to this need, several traders noted an increase in Native American trade following a major epidemic; however, no study of the Hudson's Bay Company or American Fur Company records has been made to investigate this phenomenon. (p. 63)

Demographic decline has been recently summarized by Russell Thornton, American Indian Holocaust and Survival: A Population History Since 1492 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1987) who writes:

It was perhaps the most severe episode of any disease among North American Indians, although it may very well only be the best documented. It is said that the smallpox was brought to the northern plains by a steamboat traveling the Missouri River, and killed 10,000 American Indians there in but a few weeks. The total numbers of American Indians thought to have died are overwhelming: 6,000 to 8,000 Blackfoot, Piegans, and Bloods; 2,000 Pawnee; virtually all of several thousand Mandan; one half the 4,500 Arikara and Minnetaree; many Osage; one-third of 3,000 Crow; 400 Yanktonai Dakota; over one-half of 8,000 Assiniboin...(pp. 94-95).

50. "Receiving Books, 1834-1848," American Fur Company Papers, Vols. 1-6, New York Historical Society. Sunder, in Fur Trade on the Upper Missouri, 1840-1865, p. 17, estimated an average of 90,000 robes per year were handled by Chouteau's Saint Louis operation during the 1840s, and 100,000 per year during the 1850s and 1860s.

On Chardon's battle with the Blackfeet I have relied on Larpenteur, Forty Years a Fur Trader, 1:216-18 and Ewers, The Blackfeet, pp. 66-67 rather than contradictory interpretations in Chittenden, Fur Trade of the American West, 1:372 and Lewis, Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture, pp. 25-2a6, both of whom place the year at 1842 rather than 1844.

51. Preston Holder, "The Fur Trade from the Indian Point of View," pp. 129-39 in The Frontier Reexamined, ed. John Francis McDermott (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1967).

52. John C. Ewers, "The Influence of the Fur Trade Upon the Indians of the Northern Plains," in Peoples and Pelts, Selected Papers of the Second North American Fur Trade Conference, ed. Malvina Bolus, pp. 1-26 (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, 1972), especially pp. 17-21. Also see Ewers, "Indian Views of the White Man Prior to 1850: An Interpretation," pp. 7-24 in Red Men and Hat Wearers: Viewpoints in Indian History, ed. Daniel Tyler (Fort Collins: Pruett Publishers for Colorado State University, 1976) and Ewers' many essays on Plains material culture in his Indian Life on the Upper Missouri (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968).

53. Ewers, "Influence of the Fur Trade," pp. 6-7.

54. John Dougherty statistics on the fur trade, as found in Chittenden, American Fur Trade of the Far West, 1:7-8.

55. "T. P. Moore, Indian Agent, Upper Missouri, to Major Thomas H. Harvey, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Saint Louis," in Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1846, House Executive Document no. 4, serial 497, p. 293.

56. "Order for Several Articles of Merchandize to be sent to Fort Union in the Spring, 1833," Chouteau Collection Box 31; "Sketch of Order for Sundry Merchandize required for the trade of Fort Union, U.M.O. Season 1834-1835, Sept. 17, 1833," Chouteau Collection, Box 31.

57. "Fort Union Letterbook," Chouteau Collection, Box 31.

58. "Ramsay Crooks to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., February 17, 1833, Washington City," Chouteau Collection, Box 29.

59. "Kenneth McKenzie to Ramsay Crooks, 16 December 1833, Fort Union," Fort Union Letterbook, pp. 20-21, Chouteau Collection, Box 31.

60. On the A.F.C. and liquor see Chittenden, American Fur Trade, pp. 246-63. The story of prohibition efforts on the Upper Missouri is summarized by Lecompte, "Pierre Chouteau, Jr.," pp. 108-119 and Sunder, Fur Trade on the Upper Missouri, pp. 48-51.

61. "Andrew Drips to Thomas H. Harvey, June 1, 1845," Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs from Upper Missouri Agency, Record Group 75, National Archives; Drips Papers, Missouri Historical Society, Box 1. For an analysis of Drips' role in the trade see Harvey L. Carter, "Andrew Drips," in Mountain Men and the Fur Trade, ed. LeRoy R. Hafen, 7:143-56.

62. Lecompte, "Pierre Chouteau, Jr.," p. 118.
63. "David D. Mitchell to T. H. Crawford, October 25, 1841," Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, Record Group 75, National Archives.
64. Gary C. Stein, "A Fearful Drunkenness: The Liquor Trade to the Western Indians as Seen by European Travelers in America, 1800-1860," Red River Valley History Review 1(1974):109-21.
65. Examples here include numerous references to disease in Larpenteur, Forty Years a Fur Trader and Edwin Thompson Denig, Five Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri: Sioux, Arickaras, Assiniboines, Crees, Crows, ed. John C. Ewers (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961).
66. John C. Ewers, "Mothers of the Mixed Bloods," El Palacio: A Quarterly Journal of the Museum of New Mexico 69(1) (1962), reprinted in Indian Life on the Upper Missouri, pp. 57-67 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968).
67. I have made the point elsewhere that very little is known about lower echelon male fur trade personnel in the American trade. The same is true of individual females, mainly Indian women, involved at all levels in the trade. See W. R. Swagerty, "Marriage and Settlement Patterns of Rocky Mountain Trappers and Traders," Western Historical Quarterly 11 (April 1980):159-80.
68. Examples here include John James Audubon, who was on the Upper Missouri in 1843 as reported in Audubon and His Journals, ed. Maria R. Audubon, with notes by Elliot Coues, 2 vols. (New York: Dover, 1960), pp. 77, 81; Rudolph Friederich Kurz, The Journal of Rudolph Friederich Kurz: The Life and Work of this Swiss Artist, ed. J.N.B. Hewitt and trans. by Myrtis Jarrell (Fairfield, Wa.: Ye Galleon Press, n.d.), p. 79.
69. Henry A. Boller, "Journal of a Trip to and Residence in, the Indian Country," [1858], ed. Ray H. Mattison. North Dakota History 33(1966):261-315, at 303.
70. Rayna D. Green, "The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Women in American Culture," The Massachusetts Review 16 (1975): 698-714; Katherine M. Weist, "Beasts of Burden and Menial Slaves: Nineteenth Century Observations of Northern Plains Indian Women," pp. 29-52 in The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women, ed. Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1983).
71. There is a growing literature on gender and the fur trade as surveyed by Jacqueline Peterson and John Anfinson in "The Indian and the Fur Trade." Also see The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America, ed. Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown (Lincoln and Winnipeg: University of Nebraska Press and University of Manitoba Press, 1985).
72. Edwin T. Denig, "Indian Tribes of the Upper Missouri," in Forty-Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, ed. J.N.B. Hewitt (Washington: Government Printing Office for the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1930), p. 504.

73. On polygamy among the Blackfoot, Clark Wissler wrote:

There were no restrictions as to the number of women taken to wife, but no woman could have more than one husband. Economic conditions, however, were unfavorable to a household of many wives, so that many men kept but a single wife and few indeed ventured to support as many as five.

The Social Life of the Blackfoot Indians. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 7(1) (1911):11.

Robert Lowie maintained that while polygamy was a Plains institution, it "never reached the excessive degree found in some African kingdoms, where the ruler would appropriate several hundred women for his service. A prominent Plains Indian might have several wives, but rarely more than four or five, and most marriages were monogamous." Indians of the Plains [1954] (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), pp. 79-80. It is unclear what specific time period Wissler or Lowie were discussing.

For more recent assessment see Weist, "Beasts of Burden and Menial Slaves," esp. pp. 41-43; and Mary Jane Schneider, "Women's Work: An Examination of Women's Roles in Plains Indian Arts and Crafts," pp. 101-121 in The Hidden Half, ed. Albers and Medicine.

74. Alan Klein, "The Political-Economy of Gender: A 19th Century Plains Indian Case Study," pp. 143-74 at p. 165 in The Hidden Half, ed. Albers and Medicine. For a discussion of Marxist approaches by Klein and others see his "Plains Economic Analysis: The Marxist Complement," pp. 129-40 in Anthropology on the Great Plains, ed. Wood and Liberty.

75. The most significant studies here are Wissler's many contributions on the Blackfoot, especially The Material Culture of the Blackfoot Indians. American Museum of Natural History Anthropological Papers 5(1) (1910); Robert Lowie, The Material Culture of the Crow Indians. American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers 21(1922):201-70; Lewis, Effects of White Contact upon Blackfoot Culture (1942); Jablow, The Cheyenne in Plains Indian Trade Relations, 1795-1840 (1951); Frank Secoy, Changing Military Patterns on the Great Plains (17th Century through Early 19th Century). American Ethnological Society Monograph 21 (Seattle: University of Washington Press for the American Ethnological Society, 1953); and, John C. Ewers, The Horse in Blackfoot Indian Culture: With Comparative Materials from Other Western Tribes (1955).

76. The best overview of the Plains Indian Wars is Robert M. Utley, The Indian Frontier of the American West, 1846-1890 (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1984). Also see James C. Olson, Red Cloud and the Sioux Problem (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965).

77. Larpenteur, Forty Years a Fur Trader, p. 419.

78. "The Man that is struck by the Ree," as quoted by William S. Harney in "Council with the Sioux Indians at Fort Pierre, March, 1856," House Executive Document 130, serial 859, p. 30.

79. "J. W. Whitefield to A. Cumming, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Saint Louis, August 29, 1854," in Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1854, House Executive Document no. 1, serial 777, p. 303.

NATIVE ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY: SEARCHING FOR THE EVIDENCE

Arthur J. Ray
History Department
University of British Columbia

It is taken for granted that sustained trade will not take place between groups unless the parties involved derive some mutual advantage from the relationship. Therefore, interdependency must develop. Yet, the participants may be very unequal in terms of the economic power they can exert to obtain their objectives. Fur trade scholars have shown an increasing interest in attempting to determine the degree to which Indians were 'dependent' on their white trading partners at any given point in time. In other words, who held the upper hand? The papers presented here and the larger literature on the subject make it clear that it is not easy to answer this question. It seems to me that there are two important aspects to the problem: the manner in which we approach the question and the sources we use to answer it.

In his discussion of the subarctic fur trade Krech notes that literature on the subject suggests conflicting conclusions partly because writers have used different definitions of 'dependence.'¹ For some it implies the extreme case where one party is utterly reliant on the other for the 'fulfillment of all his needs.' According to Krech, in these instances: 'reliance on technology alone does not produce dependence; reliance on unsubstitutable productive technology and on food does.' For others, 'dependence' means people: 'lack economic and, ultimately, political autonomy. They live in societies located on the periphery and lack control over their own economic development.'² Krech examines the trading relations of subarctic Indians in terms of these two definitions and concludes that before 1900 most bands did not become dependent, but the stage was set for the development of dependency.³ He draws this conclusion based on the fact that many natives still relied on bush foods for subsistence. They had 'dual modes of production ... one domestic and focused on the bush and marked by exchange according to traditional cultural values, the other capitalist and centered on the town and non traditional understandings of exchange.'⁴ Can we define and measure 'dependence' and 'dependency' this way? How useful is the notion of 'dual economy'? Are there other ways of viewing trading post economies that can provide clues to these crucial questions?

Frank Tough's recent and very important work on the native economy of northern Manitoba between 1870 and 1930 has showed conclusively that: 'it is wrong to view bush life, or the time away from the post and time spent in subsistence activities, as a dimension of a true aboriginal/traditional culture relatively unaltered by 'White culture.'⁵ Of particular relevance here, Tough argues convincingly that: 'even if more time is spent on subsistence activities, the commercial aspect remains dominant. Income from trapping was used to purchase equipment or the means of production, used by both the subsistence and commercial sectors. A productive subsistence sector, in other words the internal cycle of production and consumption, reduced the cost of fur production for this mercantile industry.'⁶ Very early the traders learned that whenever food was scarce natives had to divert their energies away from fur production. For this reason it made good business sense to make sure that native people did not have to spend too much time searching for food. For this reason a strong and

productive bush economy served the interests of the subarctic fur traders in the mercantile era.

In British North America before 1870 one of the best ways of achieving this objective was to always provide native hunters with the equipment they needed. This was done by giving them their outfits on credit. It meant a hunter could count on having adequate supplies of powder and shot, a gun in working order, traps, traplines, hachets, knives and anything else that he needed even if his previous year's returns were not sufficient to pay for them. By the late nineteenth century resource depletion was becoming a more widespread problem--particularly in the most accessible areas astride transportation routeways. Also, the introduction of railway and steamboat service made it economically practicable to ship bulkier cargoes. Under these changed circumstances a new trading strategy developed. The Hudson's Bay Company sold items like flour below cost to encourage natives to trap instead of hunt. Also, its officers provided increasing quantities of food as relief. As fur prices began to rise sharply toward the end of the century it made even more sense to make store food available cheaply so that natives concentrated their attention on trapping. These trends raise some doubts about using the changing per capita consumption of 'store food' by native people as a measure of growing dependency. Perhaps increasing consumption merely signals a shift in the nature of an already well established dependency? In other words, it may be that Indians spent a smaller share of their income buying the equipment needed to obtain country food and expended a larger share purchasing 'store food.'

Putting this issue aside for the moment, Krech and Swaggerty, and others who have written on the subject, invariably raise another problem. How do we measure levels of dependency? Let us assume for the moment that we all agree that the purchase of the means of production and store food are important indicators of economic dependency. Can we derive any kind of quantitative measures using this information that marks degrees of dependency? Are the quantitative data in the surviving records of the Hudson's Bay Company, the American Fur Company or other trading companies reliable and of the right type? Are there other clues?

Probably we will never come to a consensus about how to define a particular stage of dependency for any given group in terms of per capita expenditures. For example, Krech declared that the leading Slavey and Dogrib traders who visited Fort Simpson between 1822-27 were not very dependent. Over the five year period these leading spenders bought between 291 and 405 MB in goods.⁷ Krech does not tell us how much these Indians would have had to spend on staples before he would consider them to have been highly dependent on the Hudson's Bay Company. This problem is manifest in the writing of others who have addressed the same issue including myself.⁸ What is clear is that Indians could spend very small per capita amounts and be highly dependent. For example, when the Indians of southern Manitoba negotiated treaties 1 and 2 in 1871 they accepted an annual annuity of \$3 per person. Government negotiator Weymess Simpson said that this was not a large sum but it was enough for a hunter to obtain all his basic necessities considering that each of his dependents also received annuities. This means that in the early 1870s \$12 to \$15 dollars per family was sufficient to provide Manitoba Indians with an outfit and other staple items.⁹ The Ojibwa of Treaty 3 (northern Ontario) demanded more; they obtained \$5 per person or \$20-25 per family. Of particular relevance here, these Ojibwa saw in the treaty negotiations an opportunity to secure a sufficient income for themselves to buy outfits without having to turn to the Hudson's Bay

Company fur traders for credit.¹⁰ For them \$20-25 per family bought a high degree of independence from the fur traders. As such it serves as a benchmark for this region.

In our attempts to obtain 'hard data' we have to confront the problem of sources. For those studying subarctic Indians the Hudson's Bay Company's archives are very rich and essential. Nonetheless there are problems. The company's post accountbooks for the pre 1770s do not provide any data on the spending patterns of individual natives. Only data regarding the aggregate sales to Indians are available. It is usually not possible to estimate per capita production of furs or consumption of goods because the population data which is available is at best very scanty. Scattered Indian debt books survive mostly from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and they are the best sources for occasional glimpses of the trading habits of hunters. However, these documents must be used with caution. It is not always entirely clear whether or not an individual Indian was buying for his immediate family or for several families.

Even more problematic, the surviving debt books may not give us a true picture of what the natives owed at a post at any given time for many reasons. When competition was intense or fur prices were falling the Governor and Committee (London directors) of the Hudson's Bay Company usually ordered their post managers to cut back on the amount of debt they normally extended to the Indians. The managers, on the other hand, knew that any sudden reductions in their lines of credit could jeopardize their future trading prospects. In order to minimize this risk the traders often ignored these headquarters directives and concealed part of the credit they had given out. They did this by keeping what they variously called 'vest pocket' or 'purgatory ledgers.'¹¹ These were unofficial debt books which were kept hidden away on the chance that a district chief or inspector might make an unexpected audit. When it came time to close their books at the end of the outfit year traders adjusted the official accounts to cover any of the losses they sustained in their 'purgatory accounts.' They accomplished this by employing various schemes. Traders charged some of the goods they had given out previously as advances to post operating expenses as gifts or as relief for the sick and destitute. More commonly managers simply credited the Indians' more for their fur returns than they were worth.¹² For these reasons the debt records probably understate the amount of credit that was made available in poor trapping years or whenever upper echelons in the company gave orders to adopt a more restrictive credit policy.

These trading and accounting practices serve to highlight another very important aspect of the fur trade that is germane to the present discussion. Post managers were moderators of change. Traders and their Indian clients had vested interests (often social and economic ones) in each other.¹³ Post managers realized it was in their long term interests to protect local natives from economic and environmental fluctuations as much as possible. In years of poor hunts a manager provided more sick and destitute relief, liberal gratuities, and he extended credit to regular customers even when he knew that there was little prospect they could repay him during the outfit year. As the previous remarks have shown post managers sometimes had to 'fudge' their accounts to do this if their actions ran counter to current company trading policies. In time Indians usually paid off their obligation. But long delays posed an accounting problem for the English merchants. Repayment was often made after the bookkeepers had closed the accounts for the current outfit. In the late 19th century the Hudson's Bay Company adopted the policy of discounting and writing off unpaid debts at the end of the outfit year. They treated them as 'bad debts.'

When Indians eventually settled these debts the company entered their payments into the books as 'extraordinary gains' for the outfit in which they were received.¹⁴ This means that the surviving records leave us with a false impression that natives were not very trustworthy. In fact, they usually paid their debts when they were able to. This is not surprizing. Undoubtedly, natives perceived 'bad debts' as fulfilled reciprocal obligations to the traders.

In the case of Hudson's Bay Company records there are important qualitative clues about the nature of the economic relationships that developed between individual Indians and a post manager. In their letters, journals, and debt books post managers often made 'character assessments' of native men. If we systemmatically examine these remarks by applying a content analysis approach I suspect we may obtain a good idea about which natives were highly dependent and which ones were not. It is reasonable to suppose that company officers described hunters who were closely attached to a post in positive terms; they were the ones who were 'good hunters or trappers,' 'steady,' 'settled,' 'reliable,' 'always paid their debts on time,' and so forth. Those who were highly independent probably were 'bad Indians.' The traders regarded them as being 'lazy,' 'indolent,' 'useless,' 'insolent,' 'unsettled,' or 'never paid their debts.' For example, in 1826 the Babine and Wet'su'weten who lived near Ft. Kilmaurs on Babine Lake [British Columbia] were not closely tied to the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁵ They produced few furs or fish for the company and largely dictated the terms of trade.¹⁶ Of the 108 men mentioned in the debt book only 6 were described in completely postive terms. The rest were said to be either lazy, useless, addicted gamblers or they took their furs to the Gitksan or coastal Tsimshian.

Generally the question of economic dependency in the fur trade has largely been of interest to academics. However, recently in Canada it has taken on some practical significance. When Indians signed the so called 'numbered treaties' they were guaranteed the right to continue their usual 'avocations' or 'vocations' depending on the exact wording of these agreements. Subsequently federal and provincial conservation agencies have taken the view that the treaties intended to protect only Indian subsistence hunting and fishing rights. Commercial activities were excluded. Until recently the courts upheld this point of view when dealing with native legal challenges. However, in *Regina vs Horseman* (Edmonton, Alberta 1985) and *Regina vs George Walker* (Dawson Creek, British Columbia 1987) Treaty 8 Indians argued that commercial hunting, trapping and fishing was a 'usual vocation' at the time the treaty was signed in 1899. Furthermore, the defendents have made case that the commercial and 'subsistence' sectors of the local native economies were interdependent so that government efforts to treat them separately are unrealistic. At present both of these cases are on appeal to higher courts. Of importance here, our consideration of the question is of real consequence. It is not merely a subject for idle debate. As a group of lawyers and expert witnesses recently noted in Winnipeg, scholarship in native history plays an important role in educating the courts.¹⁷ In the past judges often made rulings in complete ignorance of the historical issues that were involved.

END NOTES

1. Shepard Krech III, 'The Hudson's Bay Company and Dependence among Subarctic Tribes Before 1900,' Paper presented at 'Overcoming Dependency Conference,' Newberry Library, 18-20 February 1988: 5-6
2. Ibid
3. Ibid, 12
4. Ibid, 11
5. Frank Tough, 'Native People and the Regional Economy of Northern Manitoba: 1870-1930s.' Ph D Dissertation, Geography Department, York University, (Toronto 1987): 124.
6. Ibid, 127
7. Shepard Krech III, 'The Trade of the Slavey and Dogrib at Fort Simpson in the Early Nineteenth Century,' in The Subarctic Fur Trade, ed. by Shepard Krech III. (Vancouver: 1984): 137-42.
8. See for examples, A. J. Ray, Indians in the Fur Trade. (Toronto: 1974): 137-65; Daniel Francis and Toby Morantz, Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay, 1600-1870. (Montreal: 1983): 25, 93, 167-8 and 170; Charles A. Bishop, The Northern Ojibwa in the Fur Trade (Toronto: 1974):
9. Arthur J. Ray, 'The Canadian Fur Trade in the Industrial Age' Under consideration, University of Toronto Press
10. Ibid
11. Arthur J. Ray, 'The fur trade in the Industrial Age: The Hudson's Bay Company and the Northern Fur Trade, 1870-1945,' In progress for University of Toronto Press.
12. Ibid
13. Arthur J. Ray, 'The Factor and the Trading Captain in the Hudson's Bay Company fur trade before 1763,' National Museum of Man, Mercury Series, Canadian Ethnology Service, Paper 28 (1975): 586-602.
14. Ray, In progress.
15. Arthur J. Ray, 'Fur Trade History and the Gitksan wet'su'weten comprehensive claim: Men of property and the exercise of title,' presented to conference 'Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada: Historical and Legal Aspects.' University of Manitoba, Winnipeg 21-23 January 1988 [proceedings forthcoming]
16. Arthur J. Ray, 'Fur trade history and the Gitksan Wet'suwet'en comprehensive claim: men of property and the exercise of title,' presented at conference

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17. Panel disucssion 'Advocates and Witnesses' at Conference on 'Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada: Historical and Legal Aspects' University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, 21-23 January 1988.

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF SUBSISTENCE RESEARCH

Mary Pete

Alaska Department Of Fish And Game

My job as commentator was simplified by the US Mail. I did not get the papers until the last possible moment, although they were sent by Express Mail. They took over 11 days to get to me. That is the nature of mail and most things in Alaska.

Today, I will speak primarily as a researcher within the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Subsistence, presenting the division's findings on subsistence, along with my own research and experience as an Alaskan native growing up in a rural community.

In 1979, the Alaska State Legislature passed a subsistence law recognizing that subsistence uses have priority over all other consumptive uses of fish and game in instances of resource shortage. This same legislation also created the Division of Subsistence within the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

A major source for the division's findings is our 1985 report. There is a 1987 update, but it is less of a glossy production.

The primary mission of the Division of Subsistence is research, specifically social science research. It has no direct regulatory, management, or enforcement authority, although there might be other divisions within the department that beg to differ on this point.

The Division of Subsistence works to understand human systems. Our duties are to gather information on the role of subsistence hunting and fishing in the lives of Alaskans, to reassess the reliance of Alaskans on food and materials acquired through subsistence hunting and fishing, to assist the Bureau of Fish and Game in their decisions about subsistence uses and harvests, to provide information and recommendations to the bureaus, boards, and department on matters related to subsistence, and to make research data available to the public, government agencies, and other organizations.

Briefly, the Boards of Fish and Game, two different boards, are appointed by the governor. Each has 7 members and they essentially promulgate regulations on the uses of fish and game on an annual basis. They are supposed to represent the full spectrum of user groups, with appropriate public and staff input, and the overall process is supposed to be democratic.

The subsistence Law has had some modifications in response to a voter initiative in 1982 and legal challenges since its creation, primarily from sportmen's groups. However, most of the changes have resulted in changes in procedural and administrative implementation of the law in the regulatory process, rather than real conceptual changes. From the rural native perspective, the changes have tightened the loopholes allowing challenges that the law violates individual and American citizenship rights, but it still does not protect cultural rights to a subsistence way of life.

Nevertheless, the current frame of the law pays regard to the management of fish and game on federal lands by the federal government, which is a fear of both sportsmen and native groups alike. In the Pribilof Islands the fur seal trade has been stopped primarily through the efforts of animal rights groups. What matters for my discussion is that the legal definition has remained somewhat intact since 1978.

Subsistence is a customary and traditional use of fish and game by rural Alaskan residents for family use, trade, or barter. This is in recognition of local trade networks that have been in existence at least since earliest recorded history. Essentially, it is the non-commercial hunting and fishing of local wild resources. Subsistence uses are a major component of the economy and figure prominently in the social welfare of many Alaskan communities, primarily rural.

Interviews and findings by the Division of Subsistence were presented at the 1985 meeting of the American Anthropological Association by Robert Wolf, our research director, and Robert Walker, our bionutritionist. Most of our research in subsequent community studies supports these findings. (However, there are major gaps, such as subregional centers and the extent of barter, which have not been studied.)

Their paper set to describe the productivity and geographical distribution of subsistence harvests in Alaska during the 1980s based on Division of Subsistence research in about 81 communities and other sources for about 4 urban centers.

Their findings are as follows. Subsistence is a relatively hidden component of Alaska's economy, unmeasured by indices of economic growth and social welfare, and neglected in state economic development policy.

They used harvest levels as a measure of productivity, converted into pounds of fish and wildlife produced per capita annually, using several statistical analyses of the data which I will not detail here. They arrived at a mathematical model accounting for variations in the total subsistence output of the sample communities. The factors they considered in the model were 1) settlement entry or non-native homesteading, 2) geographic regions, 3) road connectedness, and 4) community income levels.

Their summary findings are 1) annual per capita harvest ranged tremendously from a low of 10 pounds in Anchorage, which is the largest urban center in the state (I think it still encompasses half the state population) to a high of about 1500 pounds in a small Athapaskan community on the Koyukook river.

Incidentally, my own research in Western Alaska has produced even higher per capita harvests for some of the Yupik communities, up to 1600 pounds. This is compared to annual purchases of about 220 pounds of meat, fish, and poultry by the average American, according to the US Department of Agriculture.

2) Outputs vary by ecological zone. For example, the arctic/subarctic coast has the highest outputs, overall 668 pounds per capita, mostly due to relatively greater harvests of fish and marine mammals.

Maybe, I should talk about marine mammals.

The conversion factors for mammals such as whale are really hard to control. No one knows if every pound of walrus or whale is used or how it is used.

3) Fishing output is greater than hunting in all zones, making up 57-69% of subsistence output. For those familiar with Richard Lee's thesis that hunting predominates about 60 degrees of latitude, our research shows that it needs refinement. In only 12 of the 50 communities in Alaska north of 60 degrees did hunting produce more than fishing. This is particularly true in the Yupik region. (My first language is Yupik, and our word for fish is also the word for food in general.)

4) Region is an important factor. The lowest outputs occur in urban areas. According to the topographic contours and harvest level isoclines we produced, subsistence productivity increases as one moves away from the urban centers.

5) The presence of roads is associated with reduced subsistence productivity. The roads are in the city, so, where you have roads, you have less productivity. Harvest by communities along the road network or marine highway system, which is essentially where the tour boats go, are 71% less than communities off the road network. As the percentage of non-natives increases in a community population, overall subsistence production decreases. Another index in this relationship is that the average household income of a community increases as its subsistence output decreases, so a community's income and proportionate non-native population increase in tandem.

Subsistence hunting and fishing provides a reliable economic base for many regions of Alaska.

The regional economy has been called a mixed subsistence /cash economy, relying on these dual modes of production. Krech's paper mentioned that in rural areas imported goods are incredibly expensive. This is a feature of any colonial economy where jobs and the volume of cash opportunities are real low.

(I just about choked on my toothbrush the other morning, after I got here. The TV said there was a sale of 10 pound bags of potatoes for 98 cents. In Bethel, which is relatively cheap compared to the regional economy that I live in, 10 pounds of potatoes on sale would be \$4.99, which is a good price. Sale is a relative term and the TV just brought to bear how different the economy is up there at home.)

These configurations suggest that certain types of economic development can create conditions with decreased subsistence productivity. Contributions from the subsistence sector have to be acknowledged and taken into account for understanding economic development. The commercial or wage sector of these mixed economies feeds into the subsistence sector, which is something Arthur Ray pointed out in his comments earlier.

Income from trapping supports both commercial and subsistence activities. Cash earned is converted into equipment to participate efficiently and effectively, but keeping to scale unless the economy is dominated by a commercial fishery.

By and large, the unit of production in both the subsistence and wage sector is the extended family, at least in the rural parts of the state. Families pool labor, equipment, and earnings to maintain themselves.

Economic development in parts of the state has created problems in maintaining subsistence production, such as in native enclaves within urban centers and road-connected communities. Analysis of data not yet processed at the time of the Wolf and Walker paper indicates the existence of more diverse and specialized zones of economy based on specific ecological features and availability of specific resources. For example, the relation of herring harvests, which in some areas is comparable to the contribution of salmon harvests in riverine communities.

Just to give you some idea, the per capita harvest of herring which constitutes about 40% of the total subsistence output in the villages where I worked is about 308 lbs/per capita. In communities where complete hydro surveys were administered to 100% of the households, preliminary analysis demonstrates that 70% of the harvest is produced by 30% of the households, which led to the concept of "super-households." However, if the household model is abandoned for an emic or locally defined production/ consumption unit, you find that the high producing households cooperate with low producing ones to equalize participation in subsistence activities. Usually, the high producing

households are the parents of the low producing ones. This is essentially a phase in the development cycle of households.

By the way, in the area where I worked, the nuclear family households are a relatively new introduction. Men and women live and lived in separate residential units. Men had a mens' house and women lived with their children in extended families, female oriented units. So, it was very easy for me to continue using these emic units of analysis because, even though the residential units have changed, the behavior persists. Men and women don't talk to each other, for one thing. Women cooperate with their female relatives and men cooperate with their male relatives to carry on day to day activities.

With this general overview of recent division findings, I would like to turn to the region of Alaska in which I grew up and now work.

The Yukon-Kuskokwim delta region, roughly 50,000 square miles occupied by some 17,000 people, most of whom are Yupik Eskimo, reside in about 49 year round settlements, although the regional Alaska Native Settlement Act Corporations recognize 56 villages in the same region. The additional 7 were significant seasonal settlements as recently as the 1960s, when employers' policies requiring parents to keep children in school resulted in abandonment of these sites for places that maintain schools. The region is highly diverse, even though it embraces a single cultural tradition. This diversity stems from differential social intensity and time depths of non-native contact and response to that contact. There were at least 18 societies at the turn of the century, and maybe at least 2 more. Each society was defined as those who share ancestors, roughly, because kinship is the principle by which you relate to people, whether they are native or white. Each of these societies has had distinctive annual rounds and distinctive dialects. (In many of these communities the first language is still Yupik. Yupik was my first language. You can still go to communities where, throughout the whole day, if you are lucky, you will not hear a single word of English spoken.)

These societies generally constituted a marriage universe and occupied a loosely bounded territory. Prior to Russian contact, these groups did war against each other. (By the way, the main reason for the stoppage of war was to permit trade among natives, that is, native not non-native trading.)

One group that I have had the good fortune to work with recently experienced a depletion of a critical resource, and they manipulated the imposed political system to regain production and local reliance on the resource. They rejected dependency or the submission of decision-making control to exercise their preferred way of life. These were the people of Nelson island.

The Nelson island people view themselves as dependent on herring, not on any other people or any other outside group of decision makers. The herring stocks were depleted in the late 1970s by Japanese and Soviet offshore fishing. At first, the local communities were not sure as to what was going on because they were not plugged into the national economy. They have never been involved in the commercial fishery. Only about 9 men held permits in the highly lucrative Bristol Bay Salmon fishery. These would leave the region every year with their families or their sons to participate in those runs, but they never viewed their activity as something they wanted to import into their home area because they saw the depletion of some salmon stocks and did not want that to happen to their herring.

When the herring were depleted, a few of the stock would still come back to spawn, but the local technology and equipment was not adequate to continue

to harvest them. The net mesh was too large for the small size of both the herring and the runs. People tried using dip nets, but they really resisted this because they believed scooping up herring at certain depths took primarily females that were the spawners. They figured that this practice would result in further depletion of the stocks.

Nelson islanders viewed themselves as starving, even though they had food to eat. Nobody was malnourished. Yet herring, the critical resource that households provided for themselves every day, was missing. (You can not imagine how important something like herring or salmon is to some of these communities. I guess it is most like bread. That is the closest analogy I can find.)

People came to realize that it was the Japanese and Soviets who were scooping up their herring harvest. They could see the big ships, and as time went on during the late 60s and early 70s, they saw pieces of nets the Japanese would cut off their big offshore boats. These huge sections would drift to shore with seals, sea mammals, and birds caught up in them, dead.

As they pieced together this really complex picture, their tactic was to make use of the media, pool their resources to go to Washington, DC, and generally alert decision makers about their problem.

The state of Alaska responded with food drops. What was ironic about this was that the drops contained food the people did not like and the drops were made in areas where people could not get to the packages, such as mountain tops or wilderness without easy access.

Instead, Nelson islanders resorted to resources and species that are considered starvation foods. They are easy to get to, always there, and cheap to harvest. You do not need much equipment either, for example, a dip net to take needlefish, or hand made lures and nets for tomcod. To the larger world, they insisted that their use of herring was critical and as important as this other use by the Japanese and Soviets. They demanded protection for their herring so the stocks would be allowed to develop in numbers again.

Primarily due to the insistence that the Magnusson Act apply to them, in 1984, the stocks had regrouped enough to allow a harvest of the surplus. There was a Seattle fleet and a nomadic Alaskan fleet that commercially harvested herring. These kept a close watch on the Nelson island stocks, particularly using Fish and Game studies on stock sizes and recruitment. The nomadic fleet said that the surplus stocks had to be allocated to an offshore fishery if they were not going to be utilized for inshore fisheries. (This is when I started employment with the Department of Fish and Game, and one of my first tasks was to take part in these meetings of the 5 communities in the Nelson island region and to explain the options they had in 1984.)

The Nelson island people were presented with a difficult set of options. They could risk the nomadic fleet's harvest by not securing clearance to take the surplus, or they themselves could propose commercial harvest of the subsistence use stock with an inshore fishery designed to allow local technology and people to compete in the market. They went with the latter. They asked the Board of Fisheries to open the herring stocks to commercial harvest, setting up one of the few fisheries to regulate vessel size, net length, and they also, although this particular provision is really hard to enforce, established what is called a super exclusive use provision. Essentially, what this stipulates is that if you fish in a particular open herring fishery, you are not supposed to fish in a super exclusive use fishery.

Despite problems with maintaining the structure and management to benefit local participation, they felt that their decision was the right one. The herring commercial fishery supports a local mixed economy. Herring is a principal item in the subsistence sector and it has become an important item in the local commercial sector. As part of my research on herring, in one of the communities, I administered a complete harvest survey and a complete income survey.

Lastly, this survey allows me to say something about fur trapping. In the year that I administered it, the snow conditions and fur prices were not conducive to the usual effort levels of fur trapping. However, there was surprisingly more harvest of fur animals than the Division of Game predicted, based on their records of pelts and tagging. Primarily because most of the furs were not being channelled into the larger market. Furs were used for the production of local clothing, or made into products circulated in the local cottage industries, which is a further example of the subsistence economy.

Essentially, when I asked to do the research in the Nelson island community area, after being involved in meetings to establish the herring fishery, they insisted that I take a holistic approach in my research and that I convey to the larger world that their sharing+subsistence system is very complex. They have harvested over 90 local species for family consumption and they emphasized that their economy is unique and legitimate, and should be viewed as such.

A BRAVE BEGINNING:
AMERICAN INDIAN FARMERS AND RANCHERS IN THE LATE NINETEENTH
AND EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURIES*

Leonard A. Carlson
Department of Economics
Emory University

By the end of the nineteenth century many Indian tribes in the United States were confined to reservations with insufficient resources for individuals and families to support themselves through hunting or other traditional activities; instead many had to rely on supplies -- called rations -- provided by the federal government to survive. Faced with the dilemma of how to assist Indians in adjusting to these changed circumstances, the stated goal of federal Indian policy makers was to foster the development of farming among Indians on reservations. The Dawes Act of 1887 was designed -- in part -- to achieve this goal by inducing Indians to become farmers by giving each Indian family title to its own parcel of land. By all accounts the effort to promote farming among Indians was a dismal failure: Indian farming did not expand and the years which followed the passage of the Dawes Act saw a steady decline in the land base available for future development. The origins of this failure, however, have not been clearly understood. Historians who have considered the period have often concluded that the effort to promote Indian farming was futile: Indians are typically seen as neither willing or able to become farmers.¹ This essay challenges that belief and offers an alternative explanation. The conclusion is that instead of promoting farming, the allotment system discouraged Indian farmers and where there were appropriate incentives some Indians did make progress as farmers prior to allotment.²

The sections which follow present a brief historical and theoretical background of the period and the nature of Indian property rights before allotment. This characterization of Indian property rights is used to consider the history of farming and ranching among Indians in the late nineteenth century. The data and case histories indicate that a substantial number of Indians did succeed as farmers and ranchers prior to allotment. The second part of the essay considers the impact of allotment on Indian farmers and traces the decline of Indian farming in the twentieth century.³

BACKGROUND

In the years which followed the Civil War, the federal government was forced to decide what to do with the nearly quarter of a million Indians who lived on reservations in the United States. The push of white settlers onto the west led to demands that previously undeveloped Indian reservations be opened to white settlement. At the same time an increasingly influential reform movement in the east advocated various schemes to assimilate Indians into white culture. These reformers had an almost mystical faith in the power of private property to imbue Indians with the habits of thrift, industry and individualism needed for assimilation into white culture. The Dawes Act of 1887 was a compromise between reformers and western Congressmen who wished to see Indian lands opened to white settlers.

As the reformers saw it, private property was to be the key to giving Indians the incentives to learn to be farmers. Senator Henry L. Dawes, sponsor of the General Allotment Act of 1887, expressed some of the reformers' aversion to the way in which they understood Indians to hold their land when he commented on the Five Civilized Tribes' practice of having land legally owned by the tribe:

Yet the defect of the system was apparent. They have got as far as they can go, because they own their land in common. It is Henry George's system, and under that there is no enterprise to make your home any better than that of your neighbors. There is no selfishness, which is at the bottom of civilization. Till this people will consent to give up their lands, and divide them among their citizens so that each can own the land he cultivates, they will not make much progress.⁴

The Dawes Act empowered the President of the United States to authorize the division of Reservations into 160-acre allotments, assign one to each family, and open the remaining lands to white settlers. Originally the lands were placed in a 25-year trust, but after its passage the law was amended to allow Indians to lease or sell allotments to non-Indians with the permission of the Office of Indian Affairs.

Not all Indian Reservation lands were allotted during the years from 1887 to 1934 when the allotment policy was implemented. Most reservations in the northern Plains states, Rocky Mountain states, western Oklahoma and the Pacific Northwest were allotted, and the Five Civilized Tribes of eastern Oklahoma received their lands in an analogous fashion. Most reservations in the Southwest, however, were never allotted and remained in tribal control.

WAS FARMING CONSISTENT WITH INDIAN GOALS?

The reformers who pushed for the passage of the Dawes Act saw allotment as an almost self-acting machine which would transform Indians into farmers. As discussed by Frederick Hoxie, the increasing evidence of the failure of Indians to become self-sufficient led some in the 1920s to conclude that Indians had a "primitive mental attitude" which prevented them from being successful farmers.⁵

Not surprisingly, contemporary historians reject explanations of the failure of Indian farming which allege that Indians were lazy or which picture Indian cultures as backward and doomed to extinction. Often, however, the failure of Indian farming is implicitly treated as part of the process of resisting assimilation and heavy handed programs to change Indian life styles.

A one-to-one association between learning to be a farmer or rancher and assimilation is, of course, too simple. While many tribes lacked any experience with settled agriculture or agriculture by men, Indians also had no tradition, prior to being assigned reservations by the federal government, of subsisting on treaty payments, lease income or other forms of transfer payments. Since neither is consistent with previous practice, it is not obvious which of the available alternatives is to be seen as consistent with Indian traditions. Nor did Indians have an either-or-choice of holding on to all or part of traditional cultures values and subsisting on transfer payments and traditional activities or of assimilating and learning to be farmers. Each Indian family had to decide

how to best survive in new circumstances and this would undoubtedly involve combinations of the old and the new.

The choices facing Indian families involved more than a monetary calculation: each alternative affected how one spent one's time, who one associated with, and all other aspects of life in addition to how much income one was likely to earn.⁶ Further Indians often did not know what the likely outcome would be. Would efforts to farm be successful? Often neither the agents or white farmers had any experience with farming on a given reservation. Sometimes Indians learned the hard way that a reservation had insufficient rainfall to allow for successful farming. If a family did succeed in becoming farmers, would the agent cut-off rations? Would other Indians see them as selling out to the agents and view them with disdain? Thus it might be easier to learn to farm if others were learning as well.

In the face of such uncertainty about the future, it is reasonable to expect individuals to experiment with different alternatives: some might chose farming or other new activities while others would chose to pursue traditional activities where these were still viable activities. Some might chose to do nothing if that was possible. If this line of reasoning is correct, Indian farming and ranching would expand and grow in cases where Indians were successful and saw others succeed. Similarly, Indian farming could be expected to stagnate or decline where efforts to farm or ranch yielded nothing or perhaps only a very modest return for the effort expended. There is no reason to expect Indians to push ahead where they were not rewarded for their efforts. Similarly, Indian farming would be less attractive -- and hence less developed -- where traditional activities such as fishing, hunting, or gathering wild rice were viable alternatives.

PROPERTY RIGHTS AND NINETEENTH CENTURY INDIAN FARMING

Reformers believed that Indian societies lacked individual rights to land and that this was a principle factor which prevented Indians from becoming farmers. While reformers were largely ignorant of what was really happening among Indians, there is an element of truth in their concern with property rights. Rules for regulating access to scarce resources must exist in any complex society. Why does a society need these rules? The simplest illustration of the need for regulating access to a scarce resource is the so called "tragedy of the commons". Consider a hypothetical example of a community in which each villager has the right to graze as many cows as he or she might wish on village pasture. It is easy to imagine the outcome: each villager will try to graze as many cattle as possible. Restraint by one member of the community will simply allow someone else's cows to the eat the grass first. Too much grass will be eaten and too little care will be taken in preserving the grass for future use. A solution requires social rules to regulate access to the pasture. A similar problem can arise with other types of resources owned in common -- such as a fishery. As long as a resource is scarce and valuable, there will be competition for its use.

What solutions are open to a society? Possible alternatives include 1) uncontrolled access to the resource; 2) limiting access to members of a group but granting members uncontrolled access; 3) limiting access to members of the group and regulating their activities; 4) creating individual property rights which give exclusive rights to use the resource to an individual or family.

The first and second alternatives are the least expensive arrangements to enforce, but they are also the least efficient; these will be the preferred alternatives when the resource is not scarce or enforcement is too costly; alternative four will be preferred where a resource is valuable and it is not too expensive to create and enforce property rights. Given a set of property rights, it is possible to consider how resources will be used and whether there will be wasteful use of resources. If there is a change in relative prices, it may be desirable from the point of view of economic efficiency to adopt new types of property rights, although in practice a change in property rights may be resisted.⁷

How was Indian farming and ranching organized before allotment under the Dawes Act? Reformers assumed that Indians held their land in common subject to direction by tribal chiefs. Surprisingly, neither the reformers or their critics in the 1880s or 1890s had a very clear understanding of preexisting forms of Indian land tenure. D. S. Otis in 1934 concluded that:

Friends and enemies of allotment showed no clear understanding of Indian agricultural economy. Both were prone to use the word "communism" in a loose sense in describing Indian enterprise. It was in the main an inaccurate term. General O.O. Howard told the Lake Mohawk Conference in 1889 about a band of Spokane Indians who worked their lands in common in the later part of the 1870s, but certainly in the vast majority of cases Indian economic pursuits were carried on directly with individual rewards in view. This was primarily true of even such essentially group activities as the Omahas' annual buffalo hunt. Agriculture was certainly but rarely a communal undertaking. The Pueblos, who had probably the oldest and most established agricultural economy, were individualistic in farming and pooled their efforts only in the care of the irrigation system. What the allotment debaters meant by communism was that title to the land was dependent on its use and occupancy. They also meant vaguely the cooperatives and clannishness -- the strong communal sense -- of barbaric life, which allotment was calculated to disrupt.⁸

Instead, Indians on reservations typically recognized an individual's title his or her animals and, where farming was practiced, a family's claim to the land it worked. These rights are similar to what are known in the Anglo-American common law tradition as use rights or usufruct rights. The reasons for this seems straight forward: such rights are easy to establish, functional and consistent with both the ideas of native peoples and the federal agents. Farm land, houses and animals had a recognized use rights. Pasture land on the large reservations of the Southwest and Plains States was often treated as common property or subject to tribal control.

Does this mean these property rights were optimal in an economic sense? Theory says, as it often does, that it all depends upon the costs and benefits. On the one hand, usufruct rights are relatively cheap to define and protect and they make intuitive sense to people with very different cultural backgrounds -- which may make it easier to get the social support needed to protect the rights. On the other hand, usufruct rights are hard to transfer to other users, and may lead to an uneconomic competition to claim land before someone else does. If land can not be sold or used for collateral, the question arises of how resources would be found to purchase machinery or to make capital improvements to the land.

Common grazing rights may lead to problems with over grazing. Where land was relatively abundant and defining individual rights costly, however, it may well have been an optimal or near optimal system.

INDIAN PROPERTY RIGHTS IN THE SOUTHWEST

A good place to study the nature of Indian property rights prior to the influx of white settlers is the Southwest. James Officer's interesting survey of arid lands agriculture reveals that Indian peoples of the Southwest had developed an impressive variety of sophisticated institutional arrangements to organize farming and ranching. These ranged from the Pueblo and Hopi peoples with settled villages and irrigation systems that required relatively centralized decision making, to the Apache and Navajos who were raiders and herders and had no need for a system of centralized decision making.⁹ Many tribes in the Southwest were self sufficient and able to continue traditional activities in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. The recent dramatic growth of the Indian and non-Indian population in the Southwest, however, has led to increasing problems with over-grazing and water rights.¹⁰

While there are important differences between peoples in the Southwest, all recognized individual use rights to farm land. Ownership of the land itself may have rested with the tribe or the clan, but the use of the land and its improvements rested with the individual or the family. Centralized management of group activities -- which meant monitoring individuals who might evade their share of the work (shirk) -- were common only when there was a need to construct and maintain public goods such as irrigation systems. Range land, which was abundant and difficult to enclose, was treated as a common. As long as open land was relatively abundant, such an arrangement makes sense. Difficulties with letting range land be a common will arise, of course, as population expands.

In summary, land tenure arrangements found among native peoples in the Southwest appear sensible from the perspective of economic efficiency. In some cases these institutions changed when new crops were introduced. For example, the Hopis created a new type of property right when people began to plant peach trees.¹¹

This is not to say that these land tenure arrangements were identical to those of English common law. They were not. In particular sale of lease, especially to outsiders, were often not a part of native land tenure systems. They were also embedded in complex cultural traditions and had significance in addition to their economic function.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROPERTY RIGHTS ON THE NORTHERN PLAINS RESERVATIONS

Native peoples in the Southwest offer one type of evidence that Indians had effective property rights in the nineteenth century. But could Plains warriors become farmers or ranchers? It is often stated that they could or would not. For example, one writer concludes that: "The hunters and warriors, stripped of their dignity and self-respect, were given few manly diversions, and many of them, losing the respect of the women and children, sank into an indolence that withered their souls and turned them, ultimately, to alcohol as an escape and

violence for an outlet for their hurts."¹² While alcohol abuse and other social problems were a real and understandable factor in reservation life, other things were happening as well.

If Indians were to become farmers and ranchers prior to allotment it would have been the necessary to have appropriate social institutions, including property rights in land. The reformers were convinced that such institutions did not exist. In fact, however, plains Indians aided by the agents did evolve a system of individual rights to land and animals and many were willing to experiment with ranching and farming.

The Yankton Reservation in southeastern South Dakota provides a good case study of the evolution of a land tenure system on a closed reservation. According to the agents, the reservation had lands suited both to grazing and to the farming of vegetables and grains. In the 1860's, shortly after the founding of the reservation, the agents established a so-called agency farm. The agent and hired white farmers aided and supervised the Indian employees working on the farm. The land was broken by outside contractors, as was the custom with white settlers.¹³ By 1874 Agent Gasman reported that:

About 2000 acres were planted this last spring entirely by Indians and half-breeds -- a good proportion by agency employed Indians, the rest by those who owned the fields and had teams to plow with. Owing to the fact that many are without oxen, I am compelled to hire a large amount of plowing; this however is all done by Indians and half-breeds.¹⁴

Indian farming had evolved from a completely supervised activity into one in which individual initiative played a greater role.

Four years later, Agent Douglas reported that:

Indian farming, each man to himself and on his own plot of ground, is increasing every year. Their wheat fields average from 5 to 15 acres each. A good breadth of corn was planted, and looks unusually promising and they will have more than their usual supply of vegetables including potatoes, onions, turnips, pumpkins, etc. Those with wheat fields have shown a good deal of pluck in harvesting their crop endangered by exclusive rainfall, cutting it with mowers and scythes and stacking it without any help from the farmers.¹⁵ (Emphasis added)

The system of recognizing individual property in land had already been established as a long tradition and accepted by the time federal agents were assigned to formally allot the Yankton Reservation. Commenting on the handling of the survey and assignment of allotments in 1888, Agent Kinney reported:

Much dissatisfaction was openly expressed by the Indians having small strips of timber on their claims by the instructions of the special agents not to allot any timber. They claimed that it was an injustice to them after having taken claims embracing small patches of timber bordering on a small water course and protecting it for twenty years, that such patches should be denied them and left in common for all Indians, who at once availed themselves of the privilege by cutting it and hauling it to the settlements for sale. I did not agree with the special agent in these instructions to the surveyors. The timber along the banks of the Mississippi River, it was understood, should be free to all the Indians to use for fuel and other useful purposes, but to appropriate the timber on an Indian claim for

common use I considered not only unjust, but in violation of the spirit of the law and the instructions governing allotments.¹⁶ (Emphasis added)

An important factor in evaluating land tenure on reservations prior to allotment is the security of the improvements in the land made by an individual. Uncertainty about one's claim in the future to long-lived investments could easily discourage needed investment. It does seem that on some reservations these property rights were recognized. Trosper, for example, found that when the Flathead sold a railroad right-of-way across their reservation in the early 1880s thirty individuals were compensated for losses due to the proposed route passing through their improved land.¹⁷

Did the use rights established by the community and the agents work in practice? Secondary works and agents reports suggest that it was a roughly satisfactory form of land tenure for agriculture. James Fitch stated that "the Yakimas had made quite remarkable progress in farming without fixed individual tenure. Unofficial assignments of plots to individual families had initially been made by Agent Wilbur, and these apparently served satisfactorily without generating land use or inheritance problems."¹⁸ Similarly, Ronald Trosper found that a workable system of individual tenure was operating on the Flathead Reservation before allotment.¹⁹

The reformers believed that formal allotment was needed to break up communal property among native Americans, yet the only example of common field farming cited in "Agriculture on Indian Reservations" in the 1900 Census of Agriculture was on the Crow Reservation.²⁰ On that reservation, one large agency farm was worked by Indians supervised by the agent and his assistants. Such reservation farms were started from time to time by agents as a preliminary step to teach Indians to farm their own land. Such ventures were short-lived and depended upon the supervision of the agent.

Ewers reported another attempt by an agent to introduce common property -- this time in animals -- on the Blackfeet Reservation between 1910 and 1920:

To encourage the able bodied men in this later group [full-bloods who were not ranching] to raise cattle on their own land, the government purchased 1,888 head of cattle to form a tribal herd. But the full-bloods, who had always considered live-stock in terms of individual possessions, showed little interest in the tribal herd. They acted as if it belonged to someone else. As an object lesson in stock raising among the less ambitious full-bloods, this experiment was a failure. . .²¹ [emphasis added]

Agents also encouraged Indians to share farm tools, again under the supervision of the agent or the agency farmers. References to such practices occur periodically in the reports from different reservations, often accompanied by complaints that the system was not working.

Thus the reformers were at least partly correct in concluding that common property would not work for native peoples. It may indeed be difficult to motivate workers in such a system. But they failed to realize that holding land or animals in common was also inconsistent with the traditions of many tribes.

The fact that use rights were respected does not mean that problems did not arise with such a system. Meyer discussed some of the problems that arose on the Sisseton Reservation from too haphazard an assignment of land:

Although the Sissetons had begun locating on farms during Thompson's term as agent, no thoroughgoing survey of the reservation was made at that time. Consequently, people had settled pretty much as they pleased, without regard to whether their farms were subject to description in the customary surveyors terms. By 1874, "all sorts of difficulties had grown out of local contentions about timber, land, etc.," as Adams commented. The next year C.C. Royce was sent out by the Interior Department to survey the Indian's claims preparatory to issuing certificates of allotment. Royce also found "numerous and very vexatious disputes" among the Indians as to boundaries of their claims. In many cases they had settled too close together to permit the assignment of 160 acre tracts to each family without require some to move.²²

Obviously, even if the rights of an Indian to his land and improvements were recognized as salable, Indian families on a closed reservation would have been limited to selling their rights to Indians. Such a restriction would limit the market and, ceteris paribus, limit the value of the investment. But the optimal system from a perspective of economic efficiency depends upon the costs of enforcing the different rules relative to the benefits.

INDIAN TRADITIONS AND AGRICULTURE

Did learning to farm or ranch mean abandoning traditional values? Not necessarily. Indeed, in some instances a desire to preserve traditional values lead to greater willingness to learn to farm or ranch. For example, on the Blackfeet Reservation Ewers found that when a program of assisting small-scale farmers was introduced in the 1920s:

The five-year program achieved its greatest success among the older and middle-aged full-bloods who took pride in being able to feed themselves and their families through their own labors in small-scale farming operations. The modest accomplishments of some of them were widely publicized.²³

To cite another example, on the Sisseton Reservation a leader in trying to preserve traditional values was also successful one of the most successful farmers. This emerges in Meyer's account of a conflict between Gabriel Renville, a chief of the Sissetons, and the agent.

The conflict was between the "church party," made up of those Indians who had been most strongly under missionary influence on the reservation and who had often surpassed their teachers in moralistic rigidity, and the "scout party," headed by Gabriel Renville, who preserved many of the "heathen" customs, such as polygamy and dancing, and paid little attention to Christian observances. The dichotomy was not simply between civilization and anti-civilization factions, for Renville and some of his followers were among the progressive farmers on the reservation, and they accused some of the ministers belonging to the other group of devoting so much time to their spiritual duties that they neglected their farms. Generally, however, the least progressive members of the tribe sided with Renville in his disputes with the agent, with the result he was tarred with the same brush so far as Adams was concerned.²⁴ (Emphasis added)

In this case traditional values were an aid to success in subsistence agriculture. Of course there were also conflicts between traditional values and the time demands of settled agriculture and the choices were not easy. For example the Meriam Report in the late 1920s complained that:

The Indian tendency is to lock up the house and take the whole family on any errand, journey, or excursion undertaken, and the neighbors, if there are any, often go too. Under these conditions it is impossible for them to keep domestic animals that require regular care.

That this care-free, camp life existence has its distinctly attractive features must of course be admitted.²⁵

Meyer reports a similar problem on the Santee Reservation.

The agents also objected to the tendency of some Santee to go on periodic visits to other agencies. Usually these visits had no purpose other than pure sociability, but at times they took on a religious coloration, as when an Episcopal convocation was held at Rosebud in 1880. Lightner, who had no quarrel with the Episcopalians, objected to the Indians' absence for three weeks just at a time when they should have been breaking new land and taking care of their wheat. Experience had shown, he said, that their cattle often got into the grain when the people were away from home.²⁶

Thus activities which were significant to native Americans, either for social interaction or religious observance, could be in conflict with the demands of settled agriculture. But, in some cases, it was possible to change. On the Blackfeet Reservation in the early 1920's Agent Campbell introduced a significant change:

Prior to Campbell's superintendency, the tribal sun dance encampment had occupied a full month of the Indian's time at a crucial period in early summer when they should have been home tending their crops or livestock. Campbell was sympathetic toward the Indians' religious traditions, but he was also a practical man. He and the Indians worked out a compromise. Instead of a single tribal sun dance there would be three of them in three districts of the reservation. Each family would attend the one nearest to its home. The encampment would be a single week's duration.²⁷

It is not surprising that attempts were made to have some of both worlds. Ewers reported that, "Even then, Big Lodge Pole insisted on bringing his cow, chickens and pigs to the 1923 encampment in his district, saying that he did not want to neglect his stock, but he did not want to miss the Sun Dance either. Every evening he sent one of his sons on horseback to make sure that his crops were doing all right back home."²⁸

Yet another practice that disturbed the agents on the reservations of Plains tribes was that of keeping large herds of ponies. To the agent, these horses were an uneconomic burden. Indeed, they were a traditional form of wealth that may not have been well suited to the changed economic environment. Nonetheless, they were also the key means of transportation on the spread-out reservations of the plains. From an economic perspective, we can again see that

the Plains Indians were making a painful reevaluation of the best way to hold one's wealth, as well as the best way to organize one's life.

The agent on the Yankton Reservation related another problem. As Otis tells the story:

The Yankton agent in Dakota in 1887 found the traditional Indian neighborliness very disturbing so far as agricultural progress was concerned. "They want to be together," he said. He [the agent] told of seeing eight Indian teams in less than eight-acre lot cultivating --between convivial rounds of sitting and smoking. He noted that all eight teams accomplished less in a day than a white man could. He had seen forty neighbors gathered around a threshing machine on which not more than ten men could work at a time. At the noon meal all were on hand, and at the end of the day everyone expected a sack or two of meal for lending his "gracious presence to the occasion." Under this system the owner of the field reaped for himself but a small fraction what he had sown. . .²⁹

Agents were also critical of the practice of sharing resources that was common among many Indian peoples. Agent J.A. Smith in his report on the Yankton Reservation in 1897 complained that, "The Indians' hospitality, so far as means will permit, is boundless. He will divide his last morsel with his neighbor, however thriftless and improvident he may be."³⁰ At a time when the agents were endeavoring to encourage thrift, this behavior was seen as intolerable. It is at times sad and amusing to read to agents complaining that Indians were both not good Christians and too generous with their worldly goods.

Further, it is likely that the Indian agents probably overestimated the barrier to development that the traditional values presented. Meyer stated that although the survival of older ways did "constitute hindrances to the drive to make the Santee self-sufficient . . .the problems arising from the survival of the older culture were not so serious as the agents thought they were. . ."³¹

INDIAN FARMING IN THE LATE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The discussion of Indian land tenure thus far has attempted to show that forms of property rights necessary for farming existed among native Americans in many tribes and that traditional values and identification with the group values was not necessarily an obstacle to progress. But did naive Americans progress as farmers?

Certainly, reformers and others who discussed Indian policy in the 1880s and 1890s were confident that little of note had occurred or would occur on reservations without formal, legally recognized allotment. This view was contradicted by the previously cited "Agriculture on Indian Reservations" in the Census of Agriculture for 1900 (hereafter called the 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture). This essay summarizes the reports of the Indian agents for 1899 and includes many from reservations that were either unallotted or recently been allotted.³² The 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture generally endorsed federal policy of land allotment and praised the actions of the Indian agents, but it cited enough cases of unsuccessful federal policy to give it a ring of creditability. The author of the report was encouraged by the progress of

Indian farmers and expressed optimism about the future of Indians as farmers. The introductory section concluded that:

Not with standing the numerous difficulties, there has been steady progress toward civilization in the past decade on most reservations. A number of tribes are now peaceable, self-supporting agriculturists, wearing citizens' clothing, and able to speak the English language with sufficient facility to carry on ordinary conversation. It is necessary, however to issue rations to the aged and feeble, even on reservations where the Indians are self-supporting, for it is a significant fact that among all tribes, no matter how prosperous they may be, the aged are often neglected even by members of their own families.³³

The report acknowledged that Indians faced a difficult time in any attempt to become farmers, one of the most important of which was the "poor and unfavorably located land of many reservations."³⁴ The author also noted that the administration of federal policy was a potent force for good or ill.

Two prominent factors in the advancement of the Indian are the Indian agent and the Government schools. The position of the Indian agent is one of great responsibility and opportunity, and, if the confidence of the Indians be once gained, his influence over them is very great. Under a wise, judicious, and energetic administration, progress may be rapid; but, on the other hand, a tribe will quickly retrograde if intrusted to the care of an indifferent agent.³⁵

The report, in the style of the period, passed an optimistic verdict on the capabilities of "the Indian."

Those who know the Indian best unite in recognizing his capacity for work and education. He had strength and endurance, and is reasonably industrious, but if he cannot see an immediate return for his labor, is easily discouraged. Once convinced, however, that his efforts in tilling the soil will repay him, he is usually willing to work.

Indians, as a rule, live from hand to mouth and accumulate but little. The most difficult agricultural lessons for them to learn are to cultivate their crops, to feed and care for their stock properly, and to save enough seed for the next season's planting. They depend too much upon the Government to furnish the seed, and upon nature to do the work after the seed is once put into the ground. The agricultural machinery furnished by the Government is usually left to the elements, but that purchased with their own money is protected.³⁶

The quantitative evidence reported elsewhere in the Census of Agriculture is also consistent with this view. The Census found that in 1899 (the year of enumeration) Indians operated 19,910 farms in the United States. The actual number of Indians farming was probably greater than this total.³⁷ Based on a total Indian population of 237,196 (as measured by the Census), there was one farm for every twelve persons. The average acreage was 172.5 acres, although this number is distorted by the presence of a few very large Indian farms. Twenty five percent of Indian farm land was improved.

Table 1
FARMS CLASSIFIED BY AREA IN ACRES, 1900

GROUPS OF FARMS	Percentage of Total Farms		
	White	Black	Indian
All farms.....	100.00	100.00	100.00
Under 3.....	0.7	0.6	3.9
3 and under 10.....	3.5	6.8	10.6
10 and under 20.....	5.7	16.0	13.2
20 and under 50.....	18.8	45.9	20.4
50 and under 100.....	24.8	18.0	12.6
100 and under 175.....	27.2	8.9	17.7
175 and under 260.....	9.5	2.2	4.5
260 and under 500.....	7.4	1.2	7.9
500 and under 1,000.....	2.0	0.3	6.1
1,000 and over.....	0.9	0.1	3.1

Source: 1900 Census of Agriculture, p.xcv

Table 2
FARMS CLASSIFIED BY VALUE OF PRODUCTS NOT FED TO LIVESTOCK, 1900

GROUPS OF FARMS	Percentage of Total Farms		
	White	Black	Indian
\$0.....	0.8	1.4	8.4
\$1 and under \$50.....	2.3	6.8	21.1
\$50 and under \$100.....	4.6	9.8	16.6
\$100 and under \$250.....	20.0	33.1	27.1
\$250 and under \$500.....	27.0	34.1	14.0
\$500 and under \$1,000.....	25.8	12.8	7.8
\$1,000 and under \$2,500...	16.4	1.9	3.9
\$2,500 and over.....	3.1	0.1	1.1

Source: 1900 Census of Agriculture, p.xcv

Table 3

ACRES PER FARM: PERCENTAGE OF FARMS IN EACH CLASS FOR INDIAN AND WHITE FARMERS BY REGION, 1900

Groups of Farms	Geographic Divisions									
	North Atlantic		South Atlantic		North Central		South Central		West	
	Indian	White	Indian	White	Indian	White	Indian	White	Indian	White
Under 3.....	0.3	1.3	0.5	0.5	1.5	0.6	1.0	0.4	9.5	2.4
3 and under 10.....	6.3	6.2	9.5	4.0	5.9	2.6	8.9	2.9	16.2	5.1
10 and under 20.....	14.5	7.6	11.6	6.9	9.6	3.4	13.6	7.9	15.4	7.1
20 and under 50.....	36.9	17.4	32.3	21.4	17.2	15.4	20.7	23.2	19.8	13.8
50 and under 100.....	21.8	26.3	22.4	24.1	9.1	25.7	12.6	23.9	12.9	11.6
100 and under 175.....	15.6	26.3	15.4	22.7	14.1	30.0	22.0	24.8	16.0	29.0
175 and under 260.....	2.7	8.4	5.5	9.9	5.1	11.0	5.6	7.7	2.8	6.9
260 and under 500.....	1.3	3.7	2.1	7.3	15.6	8.9	7.6	5.8	4.0	13.0
500 and under 1,000...	0.3	0.6	0.7	2.4	15.3	1.9	4.6	2.0	2.3	6.2
1,000 and over.....	0.3	0.2	0.8	6.6	0.5	3.2	1.4	1.1	4.9
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: 1900 Census of Agriculture, pp. xcix,cxiii.

Table 4

VALUE OF PRODUCTS NOT FED TO LIVESTOCK: INDIAN AND WHITE FARMERS BY REGION, 1900

Groups of Farms	Geographic Divisions									
	North Atlantic		South Atlantic		North Central		South Central		West	
	Indian	White	Indian	White	Indian	White	Indian	White	Indian	White
\$0.....	0.3	0.3	0.8	0.6	8.8	0.6	7.2	1.1	11.1	3.6
\$1 and under \$50.....	12.8	1.8	16.8	3.2	23.0	1.5	13.9	3.1	28.9	3.7
\$50 and under \$100....	14.8	4.1	17.2	6.7	22.5	3.2	10.4	6.1	19.3	5.2
\$100 and under \$250...	34.7	18.2	32.7	28.4	29.0	14.3	27.4	27.3	24.2	16.3
\$250 and under \$500...	23.2	25.9	20.2	19.4	10.4	30.3	19.1	20.9	9.4	21.3
\$500 and under \$1000..	9.8	27.9	9.7	19.4	4.7	23.1	12.3	20.9	4.5	21.3
\$1000 and under \$2500.	3.8	18.7	2.5	7.7	1.4	23.3	7.4	7.0	2.0	19.2
\$2500 and over.....	0.6	3.1	0.1	1.4	0.2	3.8	2.3	10.5	0.6	18.2

Source: 1900 Census of Agriculture, pp. c,cxiii.

Table 5

Median Value of Crops Per Farm For Indian and White Farmers 1900

Groups of Farms	Geographic Divisions					
	United States	North Atlantic	South Atlantic	North Central	South Central	West
Number of Indian Farms	19,910	366	935	4,037	7,354	6,618
Median Value of Crops per farm: Indian Farmers	\$121.60	\$195.53	\$169.72	\$90.44	\$201.27	\$74.09
Median Value of Crops per farm: White Farmers	\$501.65	\$492.28	\$335.12	\$501.65	\$620.46	\$523.47
Value per Indian Farm as a Percentage of White Farmers	.266	.397	.506	.180	.325	.142

Source: Computed from data in 1900 Census of Agriculture, pp. cxiii,c.

According to the Census, "for a race just leaving a life of hunting and fishing and just entering an industrial career, the figures [for Indians] . . . make a commendable showing."³⁸ Data on the size and value of output by category for the whole United States for Indian, white and black farmers are reported in Tables 1 and 2. Tables 3 and 4 present these data for Indians and white farmers by Census regions. The number of Indian farms and the median value of crops per farm in each Census region as a percentage of that of white farmers is presented in Table 3. As these data show, Indian and black farmers clearly lagged behind white farmers. According to the Census, the income of negro farmers was low, "probably not exceeding one half that of the white farmer" while "Indian farmers rank even lower than do even negroes."³⁹ None-the-less, these data suggest that Indians had made an substantial start in settled agriculture.

/ See Tables 1,2,3,4 /

In 1899 the total value of "crops not fed to live stock" (henceforth called simply value of crops) of Indian farmers was \$7,394,573 or \$371 per farm. This was 41.2 percent of the mean value of crops grown by white farmers. As shown in Table 5, the median value of crops grown on Indian farms in the United States was \$121.60. The median for Indian farmers was 26.6 percent of that of white farmers and 49.9 percent of that of black farmers (not reported in Table 5). Roughly one in eight Indian farms produced output worth more than the median white farmer. The level of farming by native Americans was not sufficient to make all Indian farmers free of the need for federal assistance, but this record is better than is commonly recognized.

/ See Table 5 /

Most Indian farmers either raised hay and grain (40.9%) or raised cattle (28.3%). The only other major type of product was cotton in the South Central region (the Indian Territory and Oklahoma) and the South Atlantic region -- probably eastern Cherokee.⁴⁰ The typical Indian family tilled land that they owned or was leased from another Indian.⁴¹ As shown in Table 1 the median Indian farm was approximately 50.5 acres. In the North Central region, where ranching was important, the median holding was 135.6 acres.

Indian farmers and ranchers were largely concentrated in three Census regions: South Central, North Central, and the West. For all Census regions, Indians in the South Central region (which includes the Cherokee and other experienced agriculturalists in the Indian Territory) produced crops which had the highest value per farm. The mean dollar value of their crops was 44 percent of that of white farmers in the region and the median value of their crops was 32.4 percent of that of white farmers. Indians in the West had the lowest value of output per farm. This is perhaps because of the predominance of traditional, non-market agriculture in the Southwest which was may not have been measured accurately by the Census takers.

Success in farming and grazing animals by Southwestern tribes or by members of the tribes such as the Cherokee with their long history of successful farming in the South Central region is not surprising. But what of tribes where whose way of life was more nomadic prior to their confinement to a reservation? Could such tribes succeed? As shown in Table 3, there were 4,037 Indian operated farms in the North Central region, which included the Northern

Plains tribes. The mean of size of these farms was 307 acres and the median size was 135 acres. The mean value of output not fed to livestock was \$383 and the median value was \$201.27 -- 18% of that of the median white farm in the same region. These data suggest that these had been substantial progress by Indians in the plains states prior to or just after formal allotment.

The 1900 Census is quoted extensively because it reflects a more optimistic assessment of Indian farming at the turn-of-the-century -- backed by quantitative evidence -- than is commonly recognized today.

INDIAN FARMING AND RANCHING IN THE NORTHERN PLAINS

Case studies of tribes in the Northern plains is consistent with the view that plains Indians were successful farmers. One plains tribe was the Santee Sioux, one of the eastern three subtribes of the larger Sioux Nation. In 1862 the Santee in Minnesota, driven by hunger, white encroachment on their lands, and broken promises of aid, rebelled in a brief but bloody war on the white settlers. At the conclusion of that war, most of the Santee bands were settled on three scattered reservations: The Santee Reservation in Nebraska, the Sisseton Reservation in South Dakota (with parts of North Dakota and Minnesota), and the Devil's Lake Reservation in North Dakota. At the time of their expulsion, most of the Santee farming had been done by women, but as Roy Meyer noted, "they had traveled much further on the road toward acculturation than had the western Sioux."⁴³

Following their exile from Minnesota, the Santee who lived on the reservation of the same name in Nebraska made steady progress toward self-sufficiency. The reservation was not allotted until 1885, and the output of Santee farmers grew throughout the closed reservation period. Meyer reported a steady improvement in the economic position of the Santees in the years before allotment. Expansion of agriculture slowed but continued despite a series of droughts beginning in 1887. Meyer reported that by 1884 the Santee had 184 wagons, 134 cross plows, 75 breaking machines, 28 mowing machines, 22 horse rakes, 10 reaping machines, and 3 threshing machines on the reservation. The agents gradually discontinued the practice of issuing rations to support the Indians as they approached self-sufficiency.⁴⁴

To the north, the bands that settled on the Sisseton Reservation also made great strides in becoming self-sufficient farmers. In 1882 Agent Crissey optimistically announced that the "self-support of these Indians is forever settled."⁴⁵ The number of Indians supported by government rations had declined, and Meyer concluded that the Sissetons had made substantial progress towards the goal of self-support before the allotment of the reservation in 1888. As at Santee, each Indian farmed for himself. The changes among the Sisseton Indians did not come without conflict: a bitter split occurred between the traditionalists and the progressives, or church party. But as previously discussed, some of the most active farmers on the reservation were members of the traditional group.⁴⁶

The Devil's Lake Indians were among the least acculturated of the Santee bands, but at Devil's Lake, too, substantial progress in farming was made before its allotment in 1892. Acres cultivated by Indians grew from 1,500 acres in 1882 to 5,500 in 1889. The farming was done by the Indians themselves, supervised by the agent and his employees. Farm machinery was provided by the government or purchased by the Indians. In 1883 Agent Cramsie

contributed \$192 to help ten Indians at Devil's Lake buy a McCormick self-binder. In all Meyer concluded that, "Under [agent] Cramsie's direction, the Indians [at Devil's Lake] made some long strides towards the goal of complete self-support through agriculture."⁴⁷

Nothing in the history of these three reservations suggests that the Santee Sioux were unwilling to farm or that individual Indians lacked private property rights to the land they cultivated. Aided by the agents, many Santee in the closed reservation era became farmers and gradually expanded the number of acres they cultivated.

The Fort Berthold Reservation in North Dakota is populated by three tribes: the Mandan, Arakara, and Gros Ventre. In the closed reservation period, the Fort Berthold Indians were less successful in becoming self-sufficient than the Santee, but they made a serious effort to farm and to raise cattle on the reservation. The Indians at Fort Berthold had traditionally lived in settled villages, and it was reported in the 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture that they had "always been peaceable and agriculture has been carried on by them to some extent for many years."⁴⁸ The report also praised their eagerness to improve their condition. Government policy had been to promote farming, which proved to be a mistake because of the uncertain amount of rainfall. By 1900 three straight droughts had led to a decline in the number of acres cultivated. Cattle raising, however, was a more promising activity and expanded rapidly in the years from 1890 to 1904. The number of Indian cattle on the reservation increased from 160 head in 1890 to 5,000 in 1904. Despite this progress, the Fort Berthold Indians relied on government rations for an estimated 60 percent of their subsistence. Although the reservation was allotted in 1891, by 1900 no evidence could be seen of substantial white entry on the reservation.⁴⁹

Not all tribes showed the same degree of progress as farmers or the same willingness to try new ways of making a living as the Santee and Fort Berthold Indians. An interesting exception was the Indians in Kansas: the Sac and Fox, Potowatomies, and Kickapoos. Like the other tribes discussed so far, the Indians in Kansas were relatively acculturated, but they were notably unsuccessful as farmers. According to the the 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture:

With excellent land and plenty of horses, wagons and agricultural implements, they [the Indians in Kansas] have every inducement to become good farmers, but in this respect they are making little advancement as a class. The system of allowing Indians to lease their land is accountable for their lack of industry, as their incomes from annuity payments and land rentals allow many to live in idleness.⁵⁰

The disappointing performance of the Indians living in Kansas supports the proposition that allotment, accompanied by the right to lease or sell land, retarded the progress of Indian farmers.

The evolution of property rights and the development of farming among the Yankton, from a small agency farm to more extensive cultivation by individuals on their own plots, has already been discussed. The Yankton used these property rights to good advantage. Although the Yankton Reservation was allotted in 1890, the surplus was not opened for settlement until 1896. In 1895 Agent J.A. Smith reported that, "Quite a number of the more progressive farmers will harvest sufficient grain for their own subsistence."⁵¹ Like the Santee, the

Table 6

Ranching and Farming in North and South Dakota

Reservation (Date Allotted)	Date	Population	Acres Cultivated	Output	Head of Cattle
Cheyenne River SD (1906)	1890 1900	2,823 2,550	2,160 1,000	1,149 1,314	9,000 20,387
Lower Brule SD (1901)	1890 1900	1,026 475	1,485 500	7,043 3,251	1,197 1,511
Pine Ridge SD (1906)	1890 1900	5,701 6,619	3,375 1,425	2,340 2,139	8,610 41,936
Rosebud, SD (1900)	1890 1900	5,345 4,931	4,322 1,665	9,462 8,991	3,695 16,200
Ft. Berthold ND (1900)	1890 1900	1,183 1,098	890 1,690	9,984 1,636	160 3,809
Standing Rock ND (1907)	1890 1900	4,096 3,588	5,000 3,306	19,925 25,876	4,560 21,799
Crow Creek ND (1895)	1890 1900	1,058 1,047	2,823 960	3,255 4,636	1,441 650

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs,
1884-1900, Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats and Land.

Yankton had established small farms and developed a successful general agriculture on a closed reservation.

RANCHING IN THE NORTHERN PLAINS

The tribes considered so far typically lived in regions suited to general farming without irrigation. The cultural backgrounds of the peoples considered so far differed widely, but they had remained settled on a reservation for a long time. Other tribes, however, had less contact with whites before being confined to a reservation. The last Indian peoples to come to terms with the federal government in the Northern Plains were those tribes who had hunted the buffalo. Were such tribes, settled on relatively arid reservations and isolated from contacts with whites, as successful as other tribes considered so far?

Without irrigation, land on reservations in the western Dakotas or eastern Montana was best suited to dry farming or ranching. A priori, it might be expected that these reservations were better suited to ranching than dry farming, since dry farming requires substantial acreage and capital to be successful. Ranching also entailed a way of life that was likely to be familiar and attractive to plains Indians who had experience working with horses and living in the open.

Some Indians on reservations in the western Dakotas (Standing Rock, Pine Ridge, Lower Brule, Crow Creek, Rosebud, and Fort Berthold) had considerable success as ranchers. All these reservations except Crow Creek were allotted after 1900 and all the unallotted reservations showed a similar pattern of economic growth. As shown in Table 6, there was relatively little change in the number of acres cultivated from 1890 to 1900, but there was an increase in the number of cattle on the six unallotted reservations and a decrease in Indian herds only on the allotted Crow Reservation. The number of cattle per head on the unallotted reservations in the three northern plains states in 1899 ranged from 3.2 to 8.0 cattle per capita. Using an estimate of five persons per family, the average number of head per family ranged from 16 to nearly 40. These figures do not indicate that Indian cattlemen were self-sufficient, but they again indicate a healthy beginning.

/ See Table 6 /

The reports of the agents confirm this picture of substantial progress, especially on the largest and most populous reservations: the Standing Rock, Cheyenne River, Pine Ridge, and Rosebud reservations. It was reported that on the Standing Rock Reservation, "They [the Indians] have begun to realize that their support must come from their cattle, and they give them great care, stock raising being even now their principal pursuit, although most of them grow a few small crops in addition to cutting large quantities of wild grass."⁵²

A similar story was told for the Pine Ridge and Rosebud reservations. At Pine Ridge, it was reported that:

Stock raising is their principle occupation, and the interest manifested in this industry is rapidly increasing, many having already become competent cattlemen. Recently an association was formed to protect their brands, to exterminate wolves and for other mutual benefits. At several districts on the reservation the Indians receive 50.0 percent of their subsistence from

Government rations, while, at others, practically their entire support is provided.⁵³

On the Rosebud Reservation, the report stated that, "They are making considerable progress in stock raising, with the exception of the older Indians, who did not take much interest in the industry."⁵⁴ In addition to stock raising, some Indians cut hay and planted gardens.

The Cheyenne River agent was more critical of Indian ranching practices, but the story was similar to that on other reservations:

Stock raising is their principal occupation and there is scarcely an Indian on the reserve who does not own some ponies or cattle. The Indians need instruction in the care of their stock, as they usually allow their animals to range throughout the year without feed or attention, although any now put up enough wide hay to feed their stock during severe weather.⁵⁵

Stock raising was less developed on the Lower Brule Reservation in South Dakota, in part because a greater effort was made to promote farming. As at Fort Berthold, dry spells at Lower Brule made farming uncertain. Nonetheless, the agents were optimistic about the future of the Indian cattle industry. at the Crow Creek Reservation, which was directly across the Missouri River from Lower Brule, the number of Indian cattle declined from 1890 to 1900 but rose again by 1904 to a total of 3,000 -- or 2.9 head of cattle per capita.⁵⁶

Cattle ranching began on the Pine Ridge reservation in the 1880s when live cattle were issued by the army to the Indians along with their rations. These issues of live cattle led to the creation of small Indian herds. According to Gordon Macgreggor, this was hardly a modern cattle industry since, "They ran their cattle much as they ran their herds of ponies. However, an interest in cattle had been stimulated among those Indians who had accepted reservation life and wished to remain at peace with the white man."⁵⁷

The development of the cattle industry in the 1890s was slowed by the efforts of agents to promote farming rather than ranching. The Pine Ridge Indians were further hindered by political scheming and fraud. In 1900 a new agent was appointed who was favorably disposed to the development of Indian ranching, and he remained for seventeen years. Under his direction, Indian cattle herds increased. Macgreggor reported that:

The livestock practice of this era was that of the open ranges . . . with little supervision. Each spring and fall great roundups were held, which were important events to all the Indians. During these years the Pine Ridge Dakota became steeped in the life of the cowboy, his existence in the open, his dress, his skill with horses all of which would be extremely attractive to people who had been great horsemen and lived the life of the Plains Indians.⁵⁸ (Emphasis added)

The experience of the Pine Ridge Indians suggests some of the possibilities open to Indian cattlemen. Allotment, which divided the range and encouraged leasing, was at best of no consequence to Indian development and at worst a positive hindrance. Cattle ranching on the Pine Ridge Reservation combined open ranges with private ownership of cattle.

The growth of ranching among the Pine Ridge Indians stopped with the beginning of World War I. Indian cattlemen were encouraged to sell their cattle

at the high war-time prices, and white ranchers pressed to lease Indian lands. A new agent, appointed in 1917, endorsed this practice, and from 1918 to 1921, most of the reservation was in the hands of white cattlemen. The leasing of Indian lands encouraged by the agent was described by Macgreggor as "the greatest disaster to befall the Pine Ridge Indians since the vanishing of the buffalo."⁵⁹ Indian ranching failed to recover in the 1920s from the wartime decline.

The Sioux were not the only Indians to make progress as cattlemen in the pre-allotment period. Ranching flourished among the Blackfeet prior to the turn-of-the-century and John C. Ewers concluded that, "Between the years 1887 and 1900, the Blackfeet Indians of Montana made greater progress towards civilization than at any other period of equal duration in their history."⁶⁰ Like the Sioux, the Blackfeet found that their reservation was suited to grazing and that ranching was an appealing way of life. The agents reports summarized in the 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture indicate that other Indians in Montana also made progress as ranchers in the 1890s.⁶¹

Like many tribes in Montana, Indians on the Fort Hall Reservation in southern Idaho developed a promising cattle industry before the allotment of their reservation in 1914. The two tribes on the reservation were the Bannock and the Shoshoni. The Bannock, although numerically inferior and less acculturated than the Shoshoni, were described as the dominant tribe on the reservation. The 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture reported that, "They [the Fort Hall Indians] take much interest in stock raising, employ herders, and give as much attention to their cattle as white men."⁶² Although the Indians demonstrated a willingness to become ranchers, the agent still played an important role. According to the Census, "The stock of the reservation is of a good grade and well cared for, but government supervision and aid are necessary to prevent continual inbreeding and deterioration."⁶³ Some of the Fort Hall Indians were farmers and a number of the more progressive members of the tribe had gardens. By 1900 the Fort Hall Indians had not reached a point of self-sufficiency nor the point at which they could compete with white ranchers without government aid but they had made great strides in becoming independent of government rations.

FARMING IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Like most tribes in the Plains states, many Indian peoples in the Pacific Northwest had little experience with settled agriculture prior to being confined to a reservation. But, like Indians in the plains states, many of these Indians were successful as farmers in the years before allotment. The Yakima in central Washington were primarily hunters and fisherman before signing a treaty and settling on their reservation in the 1850s. The Yakima, like the Yankton, remained in peaceful possession of their reservation until its allotment in 1897. Fitch concluded that with the help of their agent, the Yakima had a workable system of individual property before the opening of the reservation. With the exception of the decade of the 1880s, when a number of Indians left the reservation to pick hops, the Yakima made steady progress as farmers and ranchers. In addition, members of the tribe constructed irrigation canals and worked in a tribal sawmill. It would be incorrect, however, to picture the Yakima as making a complete shift from traditional to modern activities. Fitch

found that many Yakima mixed their activities, combining farming and ranching with fishing or other traditional pursuits and off-reservation labor.⁶⁴

To the east of the Yakima, the Coeur d'Alene Indians of Idaho were perhaps the most successful Indian farmers in the closed reservation era. Roman Catholic missionaries gained a wide following among Indians on the reservation and may have aided the Coeur d'Alene in becoming farmers.⁶⁵ Before 1906 the agent on Colville Reservation was in charge of the reservation, and day-to-day supervision was in the hands of the agency farmer. Left relatively to themselves, the number of acres farmed by the Coeur d'Alene grew from modest beginnings, until in 1900 it was reported that:

Agriculture is their [the Coeur d'Alene] principle occupation, and, with few exceptions, their farms are well supplied with buildings and implements.

Material progress is being made from year to year in the improvements on their farms. The acreage sown to crops in the census year was the largest ever cultivated and new land is being broken each year. Many of the Indian farms at Coeur d'Alene would compare favorably with those of the neighboring white men in the number of acres under cultivation.⁶⁶

The Coeur d'Alene Indians were able to develop individual farms, some of which were quite prosperous, with relatively little direct supervision by the distant agent and without formal allotment.

Like the Yakima and the Coeur d'Alene, the Flathead Indians of western Montana made substantial progress as farmers and ranchers. Among the Flathead, much of the farming and ranching was done by persons of mixed Indian and white ancestry. The agent commented on the contrast between the mixed bloods, some of whom were well educated and nearly self-supporting, and the full bloods, who were often illiterate and poor. Trosper concluded that the Flathead had a recognized and workable system of private property on the closed reservation. Both the number of acres cultivated and the number of Indian cattle increased in the years before the allotment of the Flathead Reservation in 1908.⁶⁷

The cases cited thus far present a picture of success by Indians as farmers and ranchers on a wide variety of reservations. Not all Indian families of Indian tribes were this successful, of course. Many failed as farmers or found the new ways not to their liking. For Indians in the Great Basin, for example, Carling Maloof and John Finlay conclude that while some groups of Indians learned English and traveled to California to work in ranches and mines "Native Americans commonly were not satisfied with working for whites, and, to the dismay of many Euro-Americans, would simply not adopt to new means of subsistence as long as they could get by some other way."⁶⁸ Fishing was an important industry for some tribes in the Pacific Northwest, and hunting, gathering wild rice, and lumbering were important to some bands of Chippewa and other tribes in Minnesota, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Nonetheless, the cases support the view that with opportunities and sufficient incentive, Indians on a wide range of reservations could, and did, learn to farm or to ranch.

INDIAN FARMING ON CLOSED RESERVATIONS: QUANTITATIVE EVIDENCE

Table 7

The Growth of Indian Farming
on Selected Reservations

Reservations	Date of 10% Allotment	Period	Annual % Change Output/Cap(BU)	Annual % Chg Acres Cult./Cap.
Southern Ute, Colo.	1896	1876-95	17.3%	27.8%
Coeur d'Alene, Ida.	1909	1886-1904	3.4	6.5
Fort Hall, Ida.	1914	1875-1904	11.3	14.8
Nez Perce, Ida.	1895	1875-92	7.0	9.4
Iowa, Kans.	1893	1877-92	21.6	14.6
White Earth, Minn.	1901	1875-99	8.1	11.5
Crow, Mont.	1907	1875-1904	13.6	14.6
Flathead, Mont.	1908	1875-1904	10.1	9.5
Omaha, Neb.	1884	1875-83	2.0	16.9
Ponca, Neb.	1890	1882-89	5.0	8.0
Santee, Neb.	1885	1875-84	10.2	21.4
Devil's Lake, N.D.	1892	1875-97	7.0	15.7
Fort Berthold, N.D.	1900	1875-99	7.9	8.2
Turtle Mountain, N.D.	1907	1875-1904	9.0	10.8
Sac & Fox Agency, Okla.	1890-94	1875-89	9.3	6.5
Quapaw Agency, Okla.	1890-94	1875-89	0.8	13.3
Pawnee, Okla.	1893	1876-92	22.6	24.4
Kaw, Okla.	1903	1875-1902	5.7	-2.9
Ponca, Okla.	1895	1879-94	50.2	12.0
Otoe & Missouri, Okla.	1899	1875-98	26.0	10.0
Osage, Okla.	1908	1875-1904	9.3	9.2
Kiowa, Okla.	1901	1875-1900	12.7	10.9
Grande Ronde, Oreg.	1891	1875-90	10.0	-5.6
Siletz, Oreg.	1894	1875-93	5.1	4.2
Umatilla, Oreg.	1893	1875-95	6.6	3.6
Warm Springs, Oreg.	1896	1875-95	-3.0	6.4
Sisseton, S.D.	1888	1875-87	1.7	20.4
Yankton, S.D.	1890	1875-89	15.4	10.1
Unitah & Ouray, Utah	1905	1875-1903	2.8	7.2
Colville, Wash.	1900	1887-99	18.9	13.2
Spokane, Wash.	1909	1877-1904	0.2	0.8
Yakima, Wash.	1897	1875-96	6.6	14.0
Oneida, Wis.	1891	1875-89	2.9	-4.6

SOURCE: Annual Reports of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Underlying data are reported in Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats and Land, appendix A, table A.6.

The reports of successful Indian farming related thus far indicate that Indian farmers were not stifled by a lack of well defined property rights on closed reservation prior to allotment. To investigate further Indian farming prior to formal allotment I selected a sample of reservations based on the number of acres cultivated.⁶⁹ In all thirty three reservations with a population of 43,266 (16.5% of the total Indian population) were included in the sample. Reservations that were allotted before 1884 were omitted. Reservations where cattle ranching was the primary activity would not qualify for Table 7 unless they also had substantial farming. The Five Tribes and unallotted reservations in the Southwest were automatically excluded.

Table 7 shows that Indian farming before allotment was growing at a substantial rate. Looking first at the acres cultivated per capita by Indians, eighteen of the thirty-three reservations had compounded rates of growth in excess of 10 percent per year, including four that had growth rates in excess of 20 percent per year. Nine had rates of growth between 5 and 10 percent per annum, three grew at less than 5 percent, and three declined.

/ See Table 7 /

Output per capita also rose at a rapid rates. Output on 13 reservations grew in excess of 10% per year, while only one showed a decline in output per capita. Of course, these rates of growth are computed from an extremely small base and this makes rates of growth extremely high. None-the-less these data suggest that Indian farmers were able to make an impressive start in the years before allotment. At the time of allotment, the per capita acres cultivated by Indians ranged from a low of 0.26 acres to a high of 40.24 acres per capita. Using a figure of five persons per family as a rough estimate of the average extended family, the per capita figures can be converted into per family averages. Thus at the time of allotment, the number of cultivated acres per family ranged from just over 1 to over 200 acres. More typically, twenty-four of the thirty-three reservations averaged between 10 and 30 acres per family. These conclusions are based on aggregate data for entire reservations, of course, and do not tell us about the number of Indians who were farming or the size of individual farms.

Descriptions of Indian farming indicate that most Indian farms ranged from 5 to 80 acres. This is consistent with the data on median farm sizes already presented in Tables 1-4. In some cases, as on the Osage Reservation, most farming was done by a few mixed-blooded individuals or white men married to Indians. On most reservations, however, the bulk of farming was done by individuals farming or ranching on a small scale. For example, in 1900 the majority of Indian farmers on the the Devil's Lake reservation cultivated between 20 and 80 acres each. The Oneida in Wisconsin cultivated between 3 and 60 acres, with some families having milk cows as well.⁷⁰ Of course, some Indians are described as refusing to farm and others did little more than raise a garden. Federal agents in Oregon, for example, reported that some Indians in Oregon were primarily farmers and others depended on hunting and fishing.⁷¹

INDIAN FARMING AND RANCHING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY:

If Indians had made substantial progress in the late nineteenth century, what accounts for the obvious economic difficulties of American Indians in the

twentieth century? In earlier work, I have emphasized the perverse impact of allotment native American farmers.⁷² As already discussed, the allotment of a reservation meant that it was divided into individually owned farms held in a 25-year trust during which time an individual could neither lease or sell the land (or mortgage it) without the permission of the agent. Land could not be willed to heirs; instead property was divided among heirs according to the relevant state law. Surplus lands were opened to sale to non-Indians after it was purchased from the tribe.

Since Indians typically already had function property rights for the land that they farmed, the key changes introduced by allotment were: 1) it was easier for Indians to sell or lease land to non-Indians; 2) it was harder to transfer land to one's heirs, since Indians could not make wills; and 3) land on the reservation was divided into holdings which were sometimes uneconomically small -- especially where ranching was the best use of the land. The ability to lease land to whites raised the return to selling land and hence reduced the incentive to farm the land for one's self. At the same time formal allotment did nothing to give Indians access to credit since Indian land could not be used as collateral during the 25-year trust period. As a consequence, we could expect more Indians to reduce independent farming in response to this increased opportunity to lease following allotment. Indeed, leasing and land sales expanded rapidly after allotment.⁷³ As the original allottees died land became divided among numerous heirs all of whom had to agree on how to use the land. Often the easiest solution was to lease the land and divide the proceeds. Over time, these inheritance problems became more and more troublesome and further hindered agriculture by Indians.

In arid areas, allotment had the effect of dividing range land into units which were too small to sustain ranching. It was feared that allotment would have an immediate negative impact on Indian ranching and in many cases it did. For example, on the Nez Perce Reservation allotment in 1895 the number of Indian cattle declined from 7,000 in 1890 to 3,763 in 1900, confirming the fears of Nez Perce cattlemen about the impact of allotment.⁷⁴ Other forms of government programs were inconsistent as well -- with agents first promoting farming, then ranching, then encouraging Indians to sell land. The reasons for this inconsistency can be found both in the difficulty of designing programs to allow individuals to assist themselves and in the interest of agents in pleasing non-Indians who might have more to gain from buying or leasing Indian land than in seeing Indians farm the land themselves.

Other factors were of course also important. Increasingly American agriculture required the use of tractors and other machinery and larger and larger farms. From 1900 to 1920, the value of the average farm in the North Central Region increased from \$4,354 to \$18,063. The average size rose from 145 acres to 180 acres. For the U.S. as a whole, the value of equipment per farm rose from \$750 per farm in 1900 to \$3,060 in 1940.⁷⁵

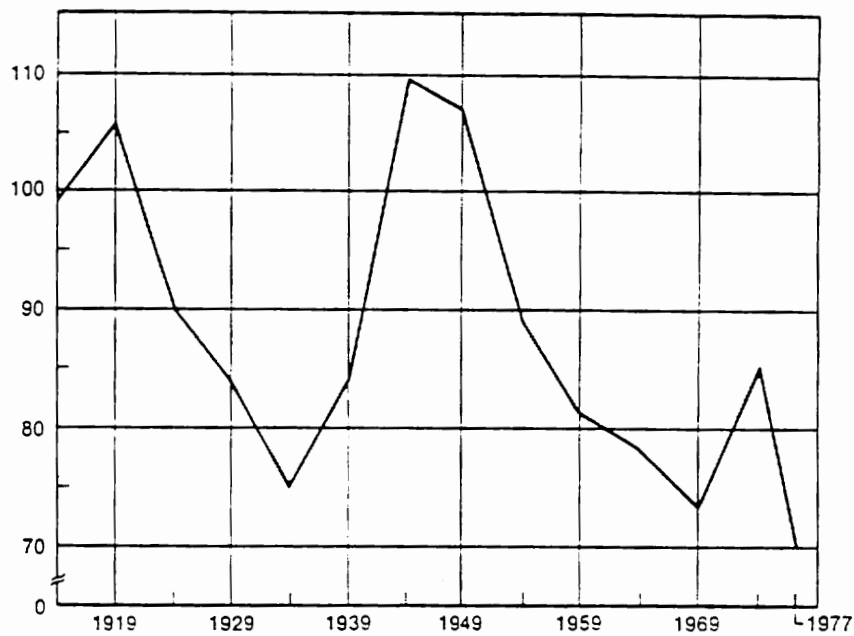
The biggest decline in Indian farming occurred in the 1920s and 1930s. These were hard times for all American farmers, regardless of race. This can be seen in figure 1, which shows the ratio prices received by farmers to prices paid for inputs they used. When this index is relatively high, farmers "terms of trade" -- the prices farmers receive compared to the prices of things that they buy -- is favorable to farmers and when it is low farm prices are low relative to the price of goods that farmers buy. *Ceteris paribus*, farmers are better off the higher the value of this index number. As shown in Figure 1, farm prices fell after World War I and did not recover until 1940. Further many farmers were

Figure 1

Ratio of Prices Received By Farmers to Prices Paid,

1914-1977

(Five-year moving Averages; 1910-1914=100)



Source: *Historical Statistics*, Series K 122-38, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Agricultural Statistics*, 1971, p. 478, and *Statistical Abstract*, 1978, p. 700.

Taken from Albert Neimi, U.S. Economic History, Second Edition, New York: Rand McNally, 1980, 231.

burdened by drought and debts incurred to buy land in the boom period prior to 1920.⁷⁶

/ See Figure 1 /

The low prices faced by farmers in the 1920s induced or forced many white farmers to leave the land and moved to cities to seek other employment. For Indians, however, moving to cities or switching to other other occupations did not begin until after World War II. In 1940 68.4 percent of Indian men were listed in the Census as farmers or farm hands.⁷⁷ As long as cultural ties and federal programs lead Indians to live close to reservations where there were few non-farm jobs, agriculture remained the best alternative. For example, the Meriam Report in 1928 emphasized the desirability of promoting Indian farming where there was sufficient land and concluded that the first step had to be the development of small-scale subsistence farming.⁷⁸ If allotment and other federal programs discouraged Indian farmers it was an event which had important and tragic consequences for Indians.

If the hypothesis that allotment and inconsistent federal policies stifled Indian agriculture is correct, there should be evidence of a decline should be reflected in the history of farming on individual reservations. A number of the tribes already discussed provide evidence of just such a decline.

The history of the Santee Sioux Indians on the Sisseton, Devil's Lake and the Santee Reservations after allotment provide a powerful indictment of the allotment policy. Roy Meyer concluded that:

The history of the Sisseton Reservation in the late nineteenth century followed much the same pattern as Santee: a brave beginning, with considerable enthusiasm among both Indians and agents, followed by a gradual progress toward self-sufficiency, culminating in allotment, which proved to be not the crowning achievement of the process as intended, but actually a disaster for the Indians, succeeded by deterioration and a return to poverty.⁷⁹

Farming declined among the Devil's Lake Indians as well. Along the decline in Indian farming came a decrease in school attendance, an increase in drunkenness, and an overall decline in group cooperation. Many Indians became more, rather than less, dependent on government support and assistance. While allotment was not the only cause of the problems of the Santee Sioux, Meyer assigns it a major part of the blame.

On the Yankton Reservation in South Dakota, the optimistic accounts of Indian farming which occurred in the reports of agents prior to allotment gradually replaced by pessimistic assessments in the years after allotment. According to the agents, Indian farmers at Yankton were tempted by offers of lease payments and discouraged by drought. Allotment was followed by a gradual decline in farming and a rise in drunkenness and other social problems.⁸⁰

The Coeur d'Alene Indians in Idaho, who were highly praised by the agents for their industry in the years before allotment, experienced a similar decline following allotment. By 1933 the Coeur d'Alene, who had been allotted 104,072 acres in 1909, owned only 62,400 acres on the reservation and leased 45,120 acres of that total to white tenants. After the reservation was opened to white settlement, tribal leaders lost much of their influence among members of the tribe and there was an increase in drunkenness, gambling, and general

lawlessness. Those who sold their lands moved in with friends and relatives and those who leased the land managed to scrape by without having to work.⁸¹

Evidence that allotment encouraged a decline in Indian farming is not confined to the 1920s. There were widespread complaints among agents in 1900 that Indians on allotted reservations were abandoning farming in favor of leasing. For example, in Oklahoma, the 1900 Census Report on Indian Agriculture concluded that "Annuity payments and the returns from leased land have allowed many [Indians] to live in idleness, and general regression has been the result."⁸²

The Comanche Indians in Oklahoma provide an illuminating case history of the impact of allotment. William Hagan found that prior to the opening of the Kiowa and Comanche Reservation in 1901, most Comanche families had small herds of cattle and that a number had opened farms. Formal allotment and the opening of the reservation were followed, among other things, by an influx of white settlers, a reduction in the level of assistance provided by the federal government, and the application of territorial laws which made Indians liable for the damage caused by their cattle. By 1910, many Comanche had responded to the increased competition, reduced levels of federal aid, and higher price of land offered by white settlers by slaughtering their herds and selling or leasing their land to whites. A family could subsist on the \$400 to \$500 a year that could be gathered from lease payments, per capita distributions of the interest on tribal funds, and part-time work and many chose to do so. The government provided schools and some services and friends and relatives could be counted on to help out in an emergency. The Comanche chiefs had warned that allotment would be a disaster; despite their objections the reservation had been allotted.⁸³

Of course, not all reservations had results so dismal as those heretofore discussed. In 1922, Commissioner McDowell found substantial progress on the Fort Berthold Reservation. The reservation was something of an exception as it was relatively isolated from contact with white settlers and Superintendent Jermark, the BIA agent in charge, was able to devote time and energy to promote Indian farming.⁸⁴ In general this was not the case. Allotment was typically followed by an increase in paper work, a decline in authority of the agent, and, too often, a belief that Indians should be given minimal assistance.

Indian ranching also evidenced a decline during the 20th century. The collapse of cattle prices in the 1920s and periodic droughts undoubtedly discouraged both Indian and white ranchers, but allotment also may have played an important role in the decline of Indian ranching. After allotment the range was often divided into uneconomically small holdings which offered an incentive to Indians to lease the land to whites who had better access to credit. On the Blackfeet Reservation a drought in 1920, which wiped out the herds of many Indians was accompanied by a deliberate policy of issuing patents-in-fec. Ewers cites a senate investigation a decade later which concluded that, "In nearly every case, the issuance of the patent meant that the Indian was defrauded of his land."⁸⁵

The case studies cited thus far are consistent with the hypothesis that Indian farming declined following allotment. In order to look more broadly at the progress of Indian farmers in the first four decades of the twentieth century, aggregate data on Indian farming by state taken from the Census are reported in Tables 8, 9 and 10.⁸⁶ In order to isolate the effects of allotment only the 11 states where a majority of Indians held land was allotted are included in the tables. These eleven states, however, account for 95% of allotted

Table 8
Indian Farms in Allotted States

State	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
Idaho	563	334	336	511	387
Kansas	83	157	103	95	64
Michigan	347	306	182	131	132
Minnesota	341	264	174	217	263
Montana	281	1,146	987	1,135	1,031
Nebraska	249	347	260	176	215
North Dakota	1,316	721	517	791	589
South Dakota	1,788	2,740	1,563	2,698	1,711
Washington	960	673	460	700	675
Wisconsin	462	541	615	258	257
Ten-state subtotal	6,396	7,229	5,197	6,712	5,324
Oklahoma	6,872	7,459	5,315	7,760	4,579
Total U.S. (including states not listed)	19,910	24,251	16,680	26,817	29,742

Source. U.S. Bureau of the Census, The Indian Population of the United States and Alaska, 1930, Census of Agriculture, 1940.

reservation land and over 50% of the Indian population of the United States in 1930.⁸⁷ Oklahoma is a special case and is reported separately from the other 10 states.⁸⁸ The data for 1900 and 1910 are taken to represent Indian farming at the end of the closed reservation era, and the data for 1920, 1930 and 1940 are taken as evidence as to how Indians fared after allotment and the opening of the reservations to whites. While crude, this division roughly conforms to the timing of allotment on a majority of reservations. Internal evidence indicates that in 1910 and 1930, when special Indian questionnaires were included in the Census, the Census counted more mixed bloods as Indians (rather than as whites) than it did in the 1900, 1920, and 1940 Censuses. Since mixed-blooded individuals were often more successful in farming and other occupations, this biases upward data on Indian farming in those years. Thus, in evaluating Indian farming in 1920 or 1940, care must be taken to distinguish changes due to allotment from sampling errors as well as changes in economic conditions.⁸⁹ Consider first the number of Indian farmers. Table 8 reports the number of Indian farms as reported in the Census for the years from 1900 to 1940. For the 10 allotted states, the number of Indian farms increased by 316 between 1900 and 1930. Comparing 1910 and 1930, years which both include large numbers of mixed bloods in the totals, there was a decline of 517 farms. Oklahoma followed the same pattern, with an increase of 988 farms between 1900 and 1930, but a decline when 1910 and 1930 are compared. The number of Indian farmers for the entire U.S. increases because the Census counted more Indian in New Mexico and Arizona as farmers, many of whom were probably not counted in earlier Censuses. Although not reported, the ratio of the number of Indian farms to the total Indian population fell between 1900 and 1930 for all 10 allotted states.⁹⁰ Thus, few if any Indians seem to have been encouraged to become farmers by allotment.

/ See Table 8 /

While the number of Indian farms did not increase, it is possible that allotment spurred those who were farming to become more successful. The number of acres in farms operated by Indians provides a crude, but important, index of how extensively Indians were farming. As shown in Table 9, the number of acres farmed by Indians in the ten allotted states peaked in 1910 at an estimated 2,131,477 acres. After 1910 there was a decline in Indian farming in every state except Montana, which was settled relatively late. Apart from Montana the remaining nine states reported a decline in acres farmed of 667,000 acres or 35.7% between 1910 and 1920. By 1930, the number of acres in Indian farms had declined in all allotted states. By 1940, after ten years of the depression, the total in the ten allotted states was even lower, 1,440,971 acres.

The data for in Oklahoma follows a similar pattern. The number of acres farmed by Indians peaks in 1900 and then declines. By 1930, Indians were farming fewer acres than they had in either 1900 or 1910. The totals show an increase in the decade of the twenties, probably because of the undercount of mixed-blooded individuals in the 1920 Census. The decline in Indian farming in Oklahoma was coincidental with increased opportunities to lease and sell land and a loss of political control by the Five Tribes.

/ See Table 9 /

Table 9

Total Acres in Indian Farms: Allotted States

State	1900	1910 [*]	1920	1930	1940
Idaho	101,869	47,918	33,468	41,760	29,578
Kansas	13,016	22,252	12,398	10,381	9,255
Michigan	15,144	13,711	7,494	6,921	3,905
Minnesota	61,378	21,917	17,922	18,392	19,058
Montana	36,554	285,746	634,956	385,382	426,654
Nebraska	31,691	49,005	29,959	12,598	19,715
North Dakota	144,716	181,676	175,376	147,203	122,794
South Dakota	1,103,854	1,410,390	829,954	776,058	702,867
Washington	111,180	85,665	67,465	105,392	96,844
Wisconsin	52,138	35,084	30,019	15,281	10,301
Total Ten States	1,671,538	2,131,447 ^a	1,836,191	1,519,368	1,440,971
Oklahoma	1,231,783	1,087,424	667,903	904,053	544,266

Note. All states where more than 50% on Indian land was allotted.

^{*}Data for 1910 interpolated from data for all non-white farms in 1910, number of Indian farms, and Indian farms relative to all non-white farms in 1900, 1920. See Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats and Land, 151-153.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Agriculture, 1900-1940.

Table 10

Indian/White Value of Land and Buildings per Farm in Allotted States

State	1900	1910 [*]	1920	1930
Idaho	0.56	0.59	0.53	0.48
Kansas	1.08	0.85	0.60	0.43
Michigan	0.25	0.32	0.32	0.71
Minnesota	0.45	0.29	0.23	0.21
Montana	0.30	0.34	0.65	0.34
Nebraska	0.49	0.48	0.44	0.25
North Dakota	0.78	0.35	0.33	0.21
South Dakota	0.46	0.48	0.32	0.22
Washington	0.34	0.51	0.32	0.50
Wisconsin	0.43	0.39	0.26	0.34
Weighted Average	0.36	0.44	0.40	0.31
Oklahoma	0.82	0.72	0.74	0.59

Note. All states where more than 50% of Indian land was allotted.

^{*}Data Interpolated. See notes to Table 9.

Sources. U.S. Bureau of the Census, Agriculture, 1900-1930.

Perhaps the most comprehensive available measure of inputs and the scale of Indian farms is the value of the land and building per farm. The reformers hoped that after allotment Indian farmers would narrow the gap and become competitive with white farmers. To measure the progress of Indian farms the ratio of the average value of land and building in the average Indian farm relative to the average for white farmers in the same state is reported in Table 10. For the ten allotted states a weighted average of Indian farms relative to white farms is also computed.

/ See Table 10 /

The picture that emerges from the data is a deterioration in the relative position of Indian farmers vis-a-vis white farmers. In the 10 allotted states, the weighted average of the value of land and building in Indian farms peaked in 1910, when it was 44% of that of the average white farm. This had declined to only 31% in 1930. In Oklahoma, the peak year was 1900, when the value of land and buildings on Indian farms was 88% of that of white farms, and the low was 1930, when the average was 59%. Other measures of Indian farming indicate a similar story of decline. The ratio of acres per farm in Indian farms relative to white farms, and the value of implements and machinery in Indian farmers relative to white farms (in 1900 and 1930) also declined. The evidence is spotty, but the value of cattle owned by Indians also appears to stay constant or decline from 1910 to 1920.⁹¹

No one piece of evidence presented here conclusive by itself, nor is it meant to be. Taken together, however, the picture which emerges after examining the data and anecdotal accounts is of a decline in Indian farming and ranching in the years after 1900. By 1930 or 1940, Indian farmers had smaller farms, smaller incomes and were more vulnerable to economic fluctuations than white farmers. Further, the aggregate data and case studies provide evidence that the gap between Indian and white farmers had widened after allotment.

The story told here reconciles the optimism of the reformers and Indian agents at the turn of the century with the pessimism of later commentators. By the 1920s, observers were united in concluding that Indian lagged the rest of society in terms of their economic position, health, and living standards. Accounts of the prospects of Indian farmers are similarly pessimistic. For example, in 1928 the Meriam Report concluded that that, "An overwhelming majority of Indians are poor, even extremely poor, and they are not adjusted to the economic and social system of the dominant white civilization."⁹² Few Indians in 1928 could be classified as successful farmers and a great majority of Indian farms were "considerably below any satisfactory standard for subsistence farmers."⁹³

On a more positive note, by 1930, Indians had made impressive gains in literacy and the ability to speak English. Nonetheless, Indians had a far lower literacy rate than any other group and many Indian could not speak English. These factors undoubtedly contributed to the reluctance of Indians to move to urban areas.⁹⁴

CONCLUSIONS

Native American in the late nineteenth century were more successful as farmers and ranchers than is often recognized in histories of the period.

Further, this success was not limited to groups in Oklahoma or the Southwest with relatively long traditions of settled agriculture: Indians with little experience with settled agriculture had made substantial progress as farmers or ranchers prior to allotment under the Dawes Act. While there were many problems, social institutions, including property rights existed prior to allotment, and were sufficient to allow for progress by Indian farmers on individual plots of land.

In the twentieth century Indian farming declined: the number of acres cultivated by Indians fell and Indian farmers were further behind white farmers in 1930 or 1940 than they had been in 1900. Despite the decline in farming, most Indians remained in rural areas where there were few employment alternatives to agriculture. The decline of Indian farming is associated with a number of factors, including low agricultural prices after 1920 and increased size and the increasing capital intensity of the typical farm in the United States, but inconsistent federal policies, including allotment, appear to have had an important role in discouraging Indian farmers. If allotment and other federal programs had indeed discouraged Indian farmers it would help to explain the changed attitudes of later observers. In 1900, Indians were poor and Indian farmers lagged behind white farmers, but Indian farmers had made recognizable progress in the recent past. By the mid-1920s and later, many Indians were still poor and efforts to develop jobs on their reservations were hindered by a diminished land base and an increased population.

If the interpretation advanced in this essay is correct, reformers and policy makers not only ignored the wishes of native Americans in formulating policy in the late nineteenth century: they under-estimated the ingenuity and resourcefulness of native Americans in making the most of difficult situation and pursued policies which undermined Indian efforts.

END NOTES

1. To give an example, one scholar finds that "Many Indians, particularly those who traditionally been nomadic hunters and gatherers, could not or would not become farmers over night; they had neither the cultural background nor the necessary training." Alvin L. Josephy, Jr. The Indian Heritage of America, (New York: Bantam Books, 1968) p. 351.
2. This essay draws on my previous work, especially Leonard A. Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land: The Dawes Act and the Decline of Indian Farming, (Westport Conn: The Greenwood Press, 1981), and "Land Allotment and the Decline of American Indian Farming," Explorations in Economic History, (April 1981) pp. 128-155. See also Leonard A. Carlson, "Federal Policy and Indian Land: Economic Interests and the Sale of Indian Allotted Land, 1900-1934," Agricultural History, vol 52, no.1 (January 1983) pp. 33-45.
3. To avoid ambiguity, throughout this essay I do not use the term dependent. While it is now common to use the terms "dependent" and "dependency" to refer to poor peoples and poor nations, the term also is associated with a set of theoretical propositions that I do not find helpful in understanding the problems of poor peoples. Not only economists reject these propositions. A major scholar in the dependency tradition has recently written that "[the term] 'Dependency' is too closely associated with simplistic hypotheses of external domination, the impossibility of capitalism or democracy on the periphery ... Dependency 'Theory' if such a thing ever existed, may well have had its day." See Peter Evans, "After Dependency: Recent Studies of Class, State, and Industrialization," Latin American Research Review, (1985) pp. 158-159.
4. Otis, The Dawes Act pp. 10-11.
5. See Frederick E. Hoxie, A Final Promise (Lincoln, University of Nebraska Press, 1984), chapter 6.
6. See Armen Alchian and William R. Allen, Exchange and Production: Competition, Coordination and Control, Third Edition, (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1983) pp. 4-5 for a good discussion of how a standard economic model might be expanded to consider such a case. Choice in this circumstance involves the "full-cost" -- including the value of time and the other non-monetary aspects of the decision -- of each of the alternatives.
7. There is dilemma in using institutions to analyze behavior. Given a set of social institutions, we can try to predict individual behavior. But the "institutions" themselves are subject to change in response to changes in the environment. This later problem has been addressed in a variety of ways. One interesting response has been by scholars in what has been called the "new institutional economics." See for example, Douglass North, Structure and Change in Economic History and "Institutions, Economic Growth and Freedom," (Political Economy Working Paper, Washington University, St. Louis). This literature is discussed by Kashik Basu, Eric Jones, and Ekkehart Schlicht, "The Growth and Decay of Custom: The Role of the New Institutional Economics in Economic History," Explorations in Economic History, Vol 24, no.1, January 1987 pp. 1-21.

One of the most interesting criticisms of this approach by an economist is that of Alexander Field, "The Problem with Neoclassical Institutional Economics: A Critique with Special Reference to the North/Thomas Model of Pre-1500 Europe," Explorations in Economic History, vol. 18, April 1981, pp. 174-198. These some of these issues are also discussed in Gary D. Liebcap, "Property Rights in Economic History: Implications for Research," Explorations in Economic History, Vol 23 no 3, (July 1986), pp. 227-252.

8. Ibid., 11.

9. James E. Officer, "Arid-Lands Agriculture and the Indians of the American Southwest," in Food, Fiber, and the Arid Lands. Tucson, the University of Arizona Press, 1971, pp. 47-75.

10. See Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, Chapters one and two.

11. Officer, "Arid-Lands Agriculture," p. 60.

12. Josephy, The Indian Heritage of America, p. 350.

13. There was at least one case occurred where the agent engaged in fraud in connection with the breaking of the land by conspiring with the outside contractors. See the Yankton agent's report in the Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1885, p. 58.

14. Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1884.

15. Ibid., 1878, p. 47.

16. Ibid., 1888, p. 70.

17. Ronald L. Trosper, The Economic Impact of the Allotment Policy on the Flathead Indian Reservation (Ph.D. dissertation., Harvard University, 1974), p. 180-81.

18. James B. Fitch, Economic Development in a Minority Enclave: The Case of the Yakima Indian Nation, Washington (Ph.D. dissertation., Stanford University, 1974), p. 87.

19. Trosper, The Economic Impact of the Allotment Policy on the Flathead Indian Reservation.

20. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," in Twelfth Census of the United States, 190, Volume V, Agriculture, pp. 721, 722.

21. John C. Ewers, The Blackfeet: Raiders on the Northwestern Plains. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), p. 318.

22. Roy W. Meyer, A History of the Santee Sioux, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), p. 208.

23. Ewers, The Blackfeet, p. 321.

24. Meyer, The Santee Sioux, p. 191.
25. See Lewis Meriam and Associates, The Problem of Indian Administration, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1928), p. 491.
26. Meyer, The Santee Sioux, pp. 192-93.
27. Ibid., p. 213.
28. Ewers, The Blackfeet, p. 321.
29. Otis, The Dawes Act and the Allotment of Indian Lands, p. 55.
30. Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1891, 252.
31. Meyer, The Santee Sioux, p. 191.
32. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census, "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," in Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Vol. V.: Agriculture, pp. 717-40.
33. Ibid., p. 717.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. It is likely that the census takers missed Indians in remote areas and some relatively assimilated Indian farmers.
38. Ibid.
39. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of the Census, Twelfth Census of the United States, 1900, Vol. V.: Agriculture, p. xcvi.
40. Ibid., p. cxiii
41. Ibid.
42. Calculate by the author from data in Census of Agriculture, 1900, pp. xcv, cxiii-cxv.
43. Meyer, The Santee Sioux, p. viii.
44. Ibid., pp. 183-84.
45. quoted in Ibid., pp. viii.
46. Ibid., pp. 212-3.

47. Ibid., p. 235.
48. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," pp. 721, 722.
49. Ibid., p. 721.
50. Ibid., p. 723.
51. Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1895, pp. 304-5.
52. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," p. 722.
53. Ibid., p. 723.
54. Ibid., 723.
55. Ibid., p. 722.
56. Ibid., p. 723.
57. Gordon Macgreggor, Warriors Without Weapons, pp. 38-39.
58. Ibid., p. 39.
59. Ibid.
60. Ewers, The Blackfeet, pp. 314-15.
61. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," pp. 728-29.
62. Ibid., p. 735.
63. Ibid., p. 735.
64. Fitch, Economic Development in a Minority Enclave.
65. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," p. 735.
66. Ibid., p. 735.
67. Trosper, The Economic Impact of the Allotment Policy on the Flathead Indian Reservation.
68. Maloof, Carling, and Finlay, John. "Euro-American Impact Before 1870," in Handbook of American Indians, Volume 11, The Great Basin. Washington, G.P.O., pp. 510-511.
69. The sample was selected using two criteria. The first criterion was whether Indians on the reservation were cultivating at least two acres per capita in 1904, the last year for which the Office of Indian Affairs published figures. This level could have been achieved before or after allotment. It is possible, however, that allotment, or the lack of allotment, led to a decline on some reservations, so

that a second criterion is employed as well. This criterion is whether the Indians on a reservation cultivated one acre per capita in 1886, the year before the passage of the Dawes Act. See Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, pp. 126-128.

70. "Agriculture on Indian Reservation," pp. 721, 719.

71. Ibid., pp. 737-738.

72. Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, Chapters 4-7 and "Land Allotment and the Decline of American Indian Farming."

73. Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, Chapters 2-3, and "Federal Policy and Indian Land: Economic Interests and the Sale of Indian Allotted Land, 1900-1934."

74. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," 783; and Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, 1890, p. 468, and 1900, p. 660

75. United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970, Volume I, Washington, G.P.O., pp. 457, 459, 461.

76. See Susan Lee and Peter Passell, A New Economic View of American History, New York: Norton, 1979, pp. 364-366, for a discussion of farm debt in the 1920s.

77. Based on states with an Indian population greater than 2000. U. S. census, Sixteenth Census of the United States Agriculture, 1940.

78. Meriam, The Problem of Indian Administration, pp. 490, 491.

79. Meyer, The Santee Sioux, p. 219.

80. U.S. Department of the Interior, Annual Reports of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (1891-1904, especially 1902).

81. John Drozier, "The Coeur d'Alene Land Rush," The Pacific Northwest Quarterly, 1962, p. 149.

82. "Agriculture on Indian Reservations," pp. 724, 725.

83 William Hagan, U.S. Comanche Relations. The Reservation Years, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 219, 271, 287.

84. U.S. Department of the Interior, Annual Report of the Board of Indian Commissioners, 1922, pp. 319.

85. Ewers, The Blackfeet, p. 319.

86. The Census data require care in their interpretation. The Census identified as an Indian anyone who identified him or herself as being an Indian. In 2 of

the 4 years studied here, 1910 and 1930, special questionnaires on Indians were included in the Census. This led to more mixed-blooded individuals being included as Indians in the data for 1910 and 1930. In general, Indians who passed as some other race in 1900 and 1920 were more like white Americans: they had higher literacy rates, faced less discrimination, and had larger farms and better jobs. Thus, it should be kept in mind that 1910 and 1930 include more mixed bloods than 1900 and 1920.

87. See Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, Chapter 6.

88. The Five Tribes of eastern Oklahoma were self-governing with a long tradition of settled agriculture. While exempted from the Dawes Act, the tribal governments were dissolved in the late 1980s with tribal land divided among members of the tribe in a similar way to the Dawes Act, although subject to fewer restrictions. Reservations in western Oklahoma were usually subject to the usual allotment act.

89. See U.S. Bureau of the Census, The Indian Population of the United States, 1910, The Indian Population of the United States, 1930.

90. Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, chapter 6, and "Land Allotment and the Decline of American Indian Farming."

91. Ibid.

92. Meriam, The Problem of Indian Administration, p. 3.

93. Ibid., p. 491.

94. See Carlson, Indians, Bureaucrats, and Land, Chapter 6.

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FARMING AND THE NORTHERN UTE EXPERIENCE, 1850-1940.

David Rich Lewis
Department of History
Utah State University

The Ute people (Nuč, Nučiu, meaning person, The People) are a culturally self-identifying confederation of twelve autonomous bands who traditionally inhabited the eastern reaches of the Great Basin, the Colorado Plateau, and the Rocky Mountain parks of Utah, Colorado, and northeastern New Mexico. The Utes are Southern Numic speakers of the Numic (Shoshonean) family within the Uto-Aztecan language stock. Once ranging widely throughout Utah and Colorado, the modern Utes are confined today to three reservations: Uintah-Ouray in northeastern Utah, Southern Ute in south central Colorado, and Ute Mountain in southwestern Colorado and northern New Mexico. This essay discusses the agricultural experience of nine Ute bands relocated to the Uintah-Ouray Reservation and today identified as the Northern Ute people. What follows is one case study of the economic dependency created by federal reservation policies aimed at turning Native Americans into self-sufficient market agriculturalists, and how the Ute people themselves responded to subsistence and environmental changes entailed by settled reservation agriculture.¹

The basic units of Ute social organization were the extended bilateral family and affinal congregations of these largely matrilineal kindreds to form local residence groups of from twenty to one hundred people. Larger "band" congregations of up to one thousand people occurred only for short periods of time each spring or summer given the environmental limitations for supporting large populations. Ute bands in Utah consisted of the Cumumba or Weber Utes, the Tumpanuwac, Uinta-at, San Pitch, Pahvant, and Sheberetch (later called collectively the Uintah Utes). Colorado Ute bands included the Yamparka and Parianuc (White River Utes), the Taviwac (Uncompahgre Utes), and the Wiminuc, Kapota, and Muwac (Southern and Ute Mountain Utes). Ute bands maintained no central councils and group leadership remained local and consensual, without hereditary positions, based upon the abilities of an individual leader for a particular task. Ute society was highly individualistic, but reciprocal kin and group sharing of food resources bound the local group together. Ute bands recognized their larger group identity through common social and religious customs, language, territory, and through intermarriage, trade, and defensive alliances against common enemies.²

The traditional hunting and gathering subsistence system of the Ute people was elegantly adapted to the relative scarcity of resource concentrations in their environment. The cyclical movements of extended family groups throughout a familiar, non-exclusive hunting and gathering territory allowed them to exploit the periodic abundance of a wide variety of game or plant foods found in different areas during the season of their precipitous maturation. Utes divided subsistence labor along sexual lines, with women responsible for the gathering and processing of vegetal foods, and men for hunting. The introduction of the horse in the mid-seventeenth century did not alter basic Ute subsistence practices of gathering a diversity of resources, but it did improve their ability to travel greater distances, concentrate more on big game animals, transport larger quantities of food, and to congregate in larger groups.³

Depending on band location, Utes traveled to the mountains in the summer to hunt deer, elk, and mountain sheep, and to gather early greens and berries. Ute hunters in Colorado traveled on foot, and later on horseback, to the high plains of eastern Colorado to hunt buffalo. In the fall Ute families moved to the pinon forests and plateau valleys to hunt deer, antelope, and rabbits, and to gather pinon nuts, grass seeds, yampa roots, and chokecherries. During the winter and early spring months Ute families congregated in larger residence groups in the lower foothills and valleys where they could find game and utilize their stored foods. In the spring these band congregations dispersed again into extended family groups to gather the new vegetal growth as it appeared. Utah Ute bands took advantage of spawning fish in the lakes and streams along the Wasatch Front, drying a supply for winter storage. In general, Utah Utes consumed more gathered plant foods, fish, rabbits and grasshoppers which were more accessible and reliable resources in the Great Basin, while the Colorado Utes placed more dependence on deer and other large mammals for their subsistence.⁴

Early Spanish contact with the Northern Utes was minimal, reaching only the southern boundaries of Ute territory with the notable exception of the Dominguez and Escalante expedition of 1776. Utes acquired horses and trade goods from the Spanish, raided their pueblos and supply lines, aided them against the Comanche Indians, and even contracted epidemic European diseases, but never submitted to Spanish administration. In 1800, scholars estimate that at minimum 8,000 Utes from twelve major bands inhabited the region. After 1810, intercultural contacts increased as Euro-American fur trappers moved into Northern Ute territory, bringing guns and other white trade goods to the Utes in exchange for furs, hides, and horses. Northern Ute bands remained aloof and independent during this "middle ground" contact situation. Only after the settlement of the Salt Lake and Utah valleys by the Mormons in 1847 and the Colorado gold rush of 1859 did the Northern Ute peoples experience the full impact of white intrusion on their territory, subsistence economy, and culture.⁵

FARMING AND THE UTAH UTES

The original Mormon settlement site in the Salt Lake Valley lay in a buffer occupancy zone between the Ute and Shoshone people and generated little immediate conflict. Mormon farmers had little opportunity to plant crops that first year, forcing them to hunt, dig roots, and gather berries for subsistence -- beginning the cycle which put them into competition with the Utes for the relatively scarce natural resources of the area. Mormon settlers came into direct conflict with the Tumpanuwac Utes as they expanded into the Utah Valley in 1849 -- an important Ute hunting, gathering, grazing, and fishing area. As the settlers appropriated the grass and fish, plowed up the land, and killed off the game, Tumpanuwac Utes turned to an alternate food source -- Mormon livestock. Mormon militias retaliated in 1850, driving the Tumpanuwac Utes from the valley.⁶

An uneasy peace reigned for the next few years, but as Mormon settlements continued to expand southward they disrupted the finely balanced Tumpanuwac, San Pitch, and Pahvant Ute subsistence strategies, and precipitated the recurring patterns of Ute starvation, begging, and depredation on Mormon livestock and fields. In 1851 Indian Superintendent J.H. Holeman warned the Indian Bureau of the increasing Indian distrust of the Mormons who appropriated "all the most

valuable lands." "The Indians have been driven from their lands," wrote Holeman, "and their hunting grounds destroyed without compensation wherefore they are in many instances reduced to a state of suffering, bordering on starvation. In this situation some of the most daring and desperate approach the settlements and demand compensation for their lands, where upon the slightest pretexts, they are shot down or driven to the mountains." The Walker War (1853-54) was but one symptom of Utah Ute displacement from their valuable hunting and gathering grounds.⁷

The Mormons were the first to offer the Ute people an agricultural alternative after displacing them from their traditional subsistence environment. In 1855 Ute Agent Garland Hurt announced the creation of three "Indian farms," staffed by white farmers. Ute leaders expressed their interest in the projects and desired the promised crops, but resisted the idea of settling down, doing the work themselves, and surrendering their diversified subsistence strategy. They told Hurt that, "they were very poor, and had to hunt most all the time to keep from starving, and if they laid down their bows to work in the fields they would soon be obliged to pick them up again." A few Ute families settled near the farms each summer and watched the white farmers work for them, but drought and grasshoppers limited the farm crops each year, forcing Hurt to encourage the Ute people to go hunting for meat and skins or face starvation. In 1860, as a result of repeated crop failures, the lack of Ute participation, and the excessive costs of operating the farms, the Utah Indian Superintendent ordered the farms closed and their improvements sold to provide temporary food and clothing for the Utes.⁸

By 1861 plans were underway to consolidate all Utah Utes in the Uintah Valley of eastern Utah. Not wanting to lose valuable land which his own people might use, Mormon Church President Brigham Young ordered a survey of the Uintah Valley, but his scouts found the valley "...one vast contiguity of waste," environmentally valueless for agriculture, fit only for "nomadic purposes, hunting grounds for Indians and to hold the world together." Since the Mormons did not want it and the Utes showed no inclination to farm anyway, officials deemed the valley suited to their "savage" condition and set aside over two million acres as the Uintah Valley Reservation. The Uintah Basin was not the waste that Young's scouts claimed, but neither was it an ideal year-round environment for the Utes. Ute bands led by Black Hawk (Auten-quer) resisted removal and continued to raid Mormon settlements for cattle and food in what came to be known as the Utah Black Hawk War (1863-68). Those who did move to the Uintah Reservation found little waiting for them at the agency and refused to settle near the agency as long as they could still obtain deer and gathered plant foods in the basin and surrounding mountains.⁹

During the 1860s, Ute agents moved the Uintah Agency several times in search of adequate agricultural lands, but the seventy or eighty acres they managed to break and plant for the Utes suffered from both periodic droughts and grasshopper plagues. Most of the agency's annual budget went towards providing subsistence rations and clothing for the people when they came in to the agency during the winter months. Government observers noted the developing habit of the Uintah Utes (as the Utah bands came to be called collectively) of traveling to Colorado in search of deer and to collect rations from the White River Ute Agency, and that White River Utes did the same thing at the Uintah Agency. The agents managed to attract a few Ute families to settle and work on the scattered garden-patch agency fields, but admitted that there existed a "great antipathy to work on the part of the men, the greater

part of what [farming] was done being by the squaws and children." Ute men continued to hunt the quickly-diminishing deer population of the Uintah Basin while agency farmers and laborers performed the bulk of the plowing and planting in their attempt to illustrate to Ute males "the dignity of labor." But the reproduction of Ute social norms in this reservation setting precluded male agricultural labor -- digging in the earth, after all, was the subsistence province of women.¹⁰

The growing Ute dependency on rations worried their agents. Agent J.J. Critchlow arrived at the Uintah Reservation in 1871 and complained that, "There seems never to have been anything more done for them than to keep them quiet and peaceable by partially feeding and clothing them and amusing them with trinkets." He decried the lack of funds, implements, and improvements on the reservation and started an aggressive campaign to transform the increasingly dependent Uintah Utes into self-sufficient farmers. Critchlow and his agency staff ran into the same cultural and environmental problems. The Uintah Utes continued to reproduce their subsistence system in the reduced environment of the Uintah Basin. In 1875, Critchlow reported that about eighty families kept garden patches totaling 200 acres, but that they did not tend them. Agency personnel did the plowing and planting and the families would return from their summer subsistence travels to harvest what wheat and vegetables managed to grow during their absence. Most Ute men refused to farm, calling it "squaw's work," and assured their agent that it was the wish of the "Great Spirit" and "Washington" that white men should work and plant crops for the Indians. Nor could Critchlow interest the men in cooperative farming, for their highly individualistic subsistence traditions precluded agricultural communalism. Without the labor of agency employees, little or no land would have been cultivated on the Uintah Reservation.¹¹

The environmental limitations of the Uintah Basin made it difficult for Critchlow to demonstrate even the potential benefits of farming to the Uintah Ute people. Critchlow and others recognized the natural disadvantages of the Uintah Basin as a place for Indians to learn how to farm even if they really wanted to. While the Basin was well watered and possessed some fine agricultural lands, it was a high, semi-arid region isolated by mountains and poor roads. The growing seasons were too short, periodic droughts and pests reduced crop yields, and the costs of a needed irrigation system were beyond the means of the agency. Critchlow reported that, "The broken character of the land, by streams, slough, rocky and alkaline patches, makes it discouraging, even to skilled laborers; much more is it so to those [Utes] unaccustomed to habits of industry."¹²

By 1880, most of the Utah Ute bands resided within the boundaries of the Uintah Reservation and were well on the way to a dependent reservation economy. Traditional foods supplemented by agency rations formed their basic subsistence diet, and the handful of Uintah Ute families who did any farming or agricultural labor became increasingly dependent on agency resources and rations. Ute leaders blamed whites and evil shamans (awu puwarat) from other Utah bands for the disappearance of game animals from the Uintah Basin and for the outbreak of epidemic diseases which ravaged their people. Hopes for a self-sufficient reservation economy diminished even further after the forceable removal of the Yamparka, Parianuc (White River), and Taviwac (Uncompahgre) Ute bands from their mountain strongholds in Colorado to the Uintah Basin.

FARMING AND THE COLORADO UTES

Beginning in 1849, Colorado Ute bands entered into treaties with the federal government designed to get them to settle down and farm the land. Over the next thirty years as miners and ranchers flooded into the mountains and mountain parks of Ute territory, the federal government made several more treaties with the Colorado Utes, forcing them to cede most of their territory in the eastern two-thirds of Colorado. In return the government created agencies staffed with teachers, blacksmiths and farmers to teach the Utes how to farm, and provided subsistence rations and clothing to keep them tied to the agencies. Many of the Taviwac (Uncompahgre) Utes moved toward their reserved area and a few settled near their agency at Los Pinos in the Uncompahgre Valley. Chief Ouray and some other Uncompahgre Utes tried their hand at farming small garden plots, but their women did most of the actual work after agency employees plowed and planted their fields. The majority of the Yamparka and Parianuc Utes (White River) refused to recognize the treaties signed by Chief Ouray without their consent, and only visited their agency along the White River periodically to collect rations and annuity gifts. In both cases the land and climate of their respective agencies proved to be disadvantageous to successful agriculture without irrigation or previous dry farming experience.¹³

In 1871 the Indian Bureau established a temporary Ute Agency at Denver to accommodate Utes traveling to and from traditional buffalo grounds on the high plains. Experience convinced many officials that it was less expensive to let the Utes hunt off their reservations than to try to make farmers of them. But John Wesley Powell and others advised Congress that this was exactly the problem -- that the Colorado Utes still had access to an abundance of game "and can live by hunting, and as long as that condition of affairs exists they will never desire to cultivate the soil, and no substantial progress can be made in their civilization." His assessment was essentially correct for in 1875 only nineteen families out of 2,900 White River and Uncompahgre Utes made any attempt at farming, and those with little success. Well over one-half their subsistence came from game and traditional foods, while government rations and beef issues made up the difference. Tensions mounted among the White River Utes when rations failed to reach their agency for three successive years (1875-77). In addition, the government ban on sales of guns and ammunition to Indians following the Little Big Horn incident hindered their subsistence hunting and forced many White River Utes to congregate at their agency for what little food was available.¹⁴

In 1878, Nathan C. Meeker, an idealistic agrarian socialist and follower of Horace Greeley, took over as Agent at White River. Meeker tried to force his agrarian ideals on the already restive White River Utes and failed. One faction led by Chief Douglas began working the agency fields for pay, but Meeker soon realized that they worked irregularly and would quit when they accumulated enough to buy guns and ammunition in order to continue hunting -- reproducing traditional adaptations through a different short-term economic endeavor. Another faction opposed all efforts to get them to farm and grew angry when Meeker moved the agency to Powell's Valley and started plowing up their valuable horse pastures and racetrack. Meeker tried withholding rations from those who refused to work, but the ridicule of their peers was enough to keep nearly all Ute males from farming. Meeker did not realize that to the Utes horses represented status and wealth and were more valued than cattle. When he told some Ute men to shoot their horses to make room for fields and cattle

the situation turned violent. After years of passive resistance to government farming efforts, years of broken promises and increasing subsistence deprivation, the White River Utes pushed back. In September of 1879, Ute warriors attacked and destroyed the agency, killing Meeker and his staff. The White River Utes managed to hold off government troops sent to quell the outbreak for nearly a week, but when they found that the Uncompahgre Utes would not join them in the struggle they negotiated a peaceful settlement.¹⁵

The incident predictably increased white agitation for the complete removal of the Utes from Colorado. In an effort to avoid removal from their homelands, Ute leaders, particularly Chief Ouray of the Uncompahgre Utes who mediated the final peace, stressed that they did not object to the idea of plowing the land for farms, but that, in this case, the White Rivers objected to the location of the plowing. Ouray used this subtle but politically sophisticated distinction to reassure the investigating commission that peaceful agricultural settlement on their own lands was still possible. The investigating commissioners agreed, placed the blame for the incident on Meeker's aggressive agricultural policy, but were powerless to halt the removal process. In the end, white cattle and mining interest groups in Colorado prevailed and the government forcibly removed the White River Utes to the Uintah Reservation. Even the peaceful Uncompahgre Utes failed to escape removal, but they did manage to obtain their own executive order reservation adjoining the Uintah Reservation in eastern Utah -- the nearly two million acre Ouray Reservation. Between 1881 and 1882 the military rounded up the Colorado Utes and forced them from their beloved homelands, even as over-eager whites rushed in to claim their Colorado properties.¹⁶

FARMING ON THE UINTAH-OURAY RESERVATION

The consolidation of the White River and Uncompahgre Utes on the Uintah and Ouray Reservation caused several problems. The Uintah Utes resented having the White River Utes placed on the eastern section of their reservation without their consent. At the same time both the Uintah and White River Utes distrusted the Uncompahgre Utes for their roll in earlier treaties and agreements which ceded land in Colorado, and were jealous of their Ouray Reservation lands. Both the White River and Uncompahgre Utes found little prepared for them upon their arrival in Utah, and faced the problems of replacing their livestock and material possessions lost in the move, learning about their new lands, and adapting to a changed and ever-limited subsistence environment. Several small bands of White River Utes refused to relocate or even to come in for rations and annuities, and continued to hunt in the mountains of Colorado. But increasing violence by white ranchers and miners on these isolated bands soon forced them to abandon their old hunting lands and move to the reservation.¹⁷

Whatever improvement Agent J.J. Critchlow saw in the Uintahs' participation in agriculture before 1881 slowed to a crawl when the White Rivers moved to the reservation. Never truly defeated, the White Rivers were, "indolent and know nothing of farming or caring for themselves by civilized pursuits, and what is worse many of them have no desire to learn... They laugh at the Uintahs for farming, and say they ought to fight and then Washington would furnish them plenty to eat." The Uncompahgre Utes were unhappy on their reservation, feared further relocation, and resisted opening new farms on land which their agent, J.F. Minniss, deemed agriculturally worthless without an

expensive irrigation system. In 1882 the Uintah and Ouray agents reported 280 acres of cultivated fields, most worked by Uintah Utes and agency employees, for the 2,825 Northern Utes. Critchlow tried to encourage the Uintah Utes to expand production and trade their agricultural produce to the White River and Uncompahgre Utes in exchange for agricultural labor and cut firewood, but the local market economy Critchlow envisioned never materialized. Instead, all three bands became increasingly dependent on government rations as a major subsistence alternative to both farming and hunting. By the mid-1880s, the combined Northern Ute people were a politically and economically dependent people.¹⁸

It did not take long for the agents at Uintah and Ouray to discover the extent of the Ute love affair with their horses. Both agents complained that the Utes maintained horse herds well beyond their practical needs. Agent E.W. Davis reported that, "In the matter of stock raising the Indians have a decided preference to ponies over cattle. Four or five Indians of the Uintah tribe own nearly all the Indian cattle on this reserve. Their influence among the tribe is measured by the number of ponies they possess, and as long as this custom obtains among them they will raise horses in preference to cattle." What was worse, he thought, was that they trained the best horses for racing, not plowing, and that their horses allowed them to continue their seasonal hunting and visiting patterns instead of staying home to farm.¹⁹

The history of Ute farming through the rest of the nineteenth century is one marked by the conscious passive resistance of Utes and their limited participation in cultivating scattered subsistence gardens. Agents and visitors to the consolidated Uintah-Ouray Reservation (1886) described the Ute farms as small garden patches of from one to four acres scattered along the reservation watercourses. They noted that the Uintah Utes appeared to be more "progressive" in their efforts to farm than the White River and Uncompahgre Utes. Agency officials continued to complain of their inability to get Ute men to farm and of the limited desires of the Indians. Agent Robert Waugh candidly admitted that Ute men were, "the most practical & least theoretical of any beings I ever came across. He wants the least & enjoys the most with the least care or effort. He views with a jealous eye any & all efforts to intrude the White Mans ways & wants upon him, & would resist them by force only that he thinks that would be harder..." than to passively resist. Ute women continued to perform the bulk of the agricultural labor after agency employees prepared fields for them. More Ute families made attempts to farm in the 1890s as their agents and the state game wardens (called "deer police" by the Utes) curtailed their treaty hunting rights in Utah and Colorado.²⁰

During the 1890s, agency employees increased the number of cultivated acres on the reservation despite pervasive Ute indifference to farm labor. By the mid-1890s, Ute agents reported that with the aid of agency employees some 260 Ute families from a population of about 1,800 Utes held farms totaling nearly 2,500 acres (not all planted) on their four million acre reservation. Ute farms produced little surplus for sale and had virtually no market outside of the Agency and the military post of Fort Duchesne due to the physical isolation of the reservation. Ute agents estimated that between twenty and thirty percent of Ute subsistence came from their own labor in "civilized pursuits" (farming and wage labor), ten percent from hunting and gathering, and sixty to seventy percent from government rations. By the end of the century alfalfa and hay replaced wheat and oats as the major Ute crops, indicating more concentration on livestock and the limited needs of the local markets. Ute livestock holdings

of horses, sheep, and cattle increased rapidly, but a few Uintah and Uncompahgre families continued to own a majority of the livestock. Under the direction of their agents, Ute councils agreed to leases on their extensive grazing lands in the western Strawberry Valley. Leasing in the 1880s and 1890s generated a cash per-capita income for the people, and the concept of leasing became established as a viable alternative to agricultural labor in the minds of many Utes.²¹

Between 1894 and 1905 the federal government moved to allot the Uintah-Ouray Reservation in severalty -- the ultimate realization of their agrarian ideal for the American Indian. For the Uncompahgre Utes allotment meant the loss of nearly all of the Ouray Reservation. Ute allotting commissioners deemed the land agriculturally valueless while mining interests lobbied Congress for access to valuable Gilsonite deposits within the reservation. For the Uintah and White River Utes allotment meant the loss of valuable forest and grazing lands in the northern and western districts of the Uintah Reservation, as well as having to share their remaining lands in the Uintah Basin with the dispossessed Uncompahgres. Allotting commissioners recognized that little of the Uintah Reservation was fit for agriculture aside from the limited river bottoms and adjacent benches due to rocky and alkaline soils and the climate. They realized that the broken nature of the country would make even the best lands difficult and expensive to clear and irrigate, but they went ahead with their orders to allot each family head eighty acres and each family member forty acres of arable land.²²

In council meetings with Indian Bureau officials, Ute leaders voiced their common opposition to allotment. They understood the connection between severalty and farming and in their speeches rejected allotment through metaphorical attacks on the agricultural things which would separate the people and break up their grazing lands (fences), that would tie them to a specific plot (log houses), that would make more of their land agriculturally viable (irrigation), and undercut their passive resistance to farming. They opposed opening the reservation to white settlers or miners whom they feared would settle among them, intermarry, and destroy their communality. All of these things threatened the more collective Ute lifestyles which had arisen on the limited reservation where the individual had fewer opportunities to live by hunting, farming, or even by collecting government rations without help from the collective group. Allotment represented a renewed effort to re-individualize the Utes economically after years of informal cooperation encouraged by government policy and a dependent reservation economy.²³

The Ute people responded to the allotment threat in several ways. Most continued their passive resistance by refusing to choose or visit their surveyed allotments. Others, particularly the Uncompahgres, tried to subvert the agricultural intent of allotment by specifically choosing land remote from the agency, fit only for carrying on their independent hunting and herding lifestyle. In other cases, White River Utes threatened band members who accepted allotments, destroyed allotment survey markers, and made life difficult for the survey crews. In 1906 a group of nearly four hundred White River and Uintah Utes fled the allotted reservation in protest. They remained in South Dakota around the Pine Ridge Reservation for two years before returning to the Uintah Basin. Perhaps the most significant response to counter the individualistic thrust of allotment involved the adoption of the Sun Dance religion -- a collective group ceremony in which individuals danced for Power (Puwa), not for themselves, but for the cohesion and collective welfare of the group. The Ute

people adopted the Sun Dance in response to the real and perceived deprivations of reservation life -- as a means to counter their growing economic and political dependency through group unity. In later years they even cloaked the Sun Dance in agricultural imagery, calling it a "harvest festival," in order to protect it from official suppression.²⁴

POST-ALLOTMENT UTE AGRICULTURE

Allotment immediately reduced Ute land holdings by 89 percent -- from over four million acres to 353,265 acres in 1905 (103,265 allotted acres and a 250,000 acre tribal grazing reserve). Whites quickly purchased and moved onto the open reservation lands which surrounded the checkerboard pattern of Ute allotments along the major streams. Minor conflicts arose between Indian and white neighbors, especially over the construction of irrigation ditches by white corporations which diverted water to white-controlled lands. In 1906, the federal government moved to protect the water rights of the Ute allottees and to make agriculture more viable in the Uintah Basin by appropriating \$600,000 for construction of the Uintah Irrigation Project. Indian Irrigation Service planners expected to bring water to an estimated 80,000 allotted acres and reimburse the government for construction costs through the sale of unallotted reservation lands.²⁵

Irrigation officials soon ran into unanticipated problems. First, the Utes roundly rejected the irrigation project. They were upset about the construction of ditches which would further divide their lands into the agrarian system they loathed, and about the sale of unallotted reservation lands to repay construction costs. Many refused to work on the ditches or to prepare their allotments for water, while others who took construction jobs as wage laborers had little time to farm. Second, project officials found that the reservation was opened and water rights established under state law, thus forfeiting federal protection of Indian water rights as guaranteed by the Supreme Court decision in Winters v. U.S. (1908). Utah state law required the filer of primary water rights to show "beneficial use" of the water within a maximum of fourteen years (by 1919), or else forfeit those primary rights to homesteaders with secondary or tertiary rights. Officials realized that with the loss of primary water rights Ute allottees would lose most of the productive capability and resale value of their allotments -- and with that the final hopes of the Indian Bureau to make the Ute people self-sufficient farmers.²⁶

Work on the ditches went forward as quickly as possible, but agency officials realized that by themselves the Utes would hardly be able to clear and cultivate ten percent of their lands in time to save their primary water rights. With or without the consent of Ute allottees, agency officials arranged leases of Ute allotments to white homesteaders at low rental rates on condition that they prepare the land for irrigation. In councils with the Ute people, agents suggested that Utes lessors could continue to live on a corner of their allotment and perform wage labor for the lessee. Officials encouraged other Utes who worked their own allotments to sell part of their land to raise money for capital improvements, and advised older Indians and people with inherited allotments to sell their land with its primary water right intact in order to gain some immediate benefit. In 1911 alone, Ute agents arranged the sale of 67 (5%) of 1,365 total Ute allotments to whites. Many Utes, particularly the White River band, opposed any further land sales and attempted to prevent members of their

band from signing away heirship properties, but the sales and leasing continued. Between 1915 and 1917, Superintendent Albert H. Kneale arranged 1,764 leases totaling about 54,000 (52%) allotted acres. In 1916, Kneale reported that they had 85,150 allotted acres under 22 irrigation canals, with 39,760 acres leased (46%), and 17,354 acres sold or pending sale.²⁷

By 1920, the Uintah Irrigation Project covered 93,000 acres -- 80,306 fit for cultivation -- at a reimbursable cost of double the original \$600,000 estimate. But the costs to the Ute people went well beyond that. Ute agents arranged the sale of over 25,000 acres of the best allotted agricultural lands to non-Utes. Faulty surveys and canal construction left some arable land without adequate water, and improper irrigation techniques increased erosion and brought up alkali patches rendering other lands worthless. Some white lessees failed to make adequate improvements or abused the land, leaving it barren and alkaline, while other whites who purchased reservation lands or allotments defaulted on their land payments. The irrigation project proved to be an expensive benefit to those Utes who actually used the water and a federal gift to those whites who bought Ute allotments or ultimately used their canals. Its legacy was one of tribal and individual indebtedness and further land sales far outweighing, in Ute terms, the economic or cultural worth of the project.²⁸

During the construction of the Uintah Irrigation Project the number of cultivated acres on the allotted Uintah-Ouray Reservation increased dramatically, as well as the number of Ute families making a subsistence living from the land. Uintah Utes, with a larger proportion of mixed-blood members and a longer contact and farming history, made more agricultural progress than the White River and Uncompahgre bands. But the statistics on this increase can be deceiving. In 1905, Ute Agents reported 131 Ute farms with 4,572 tilled acres, much of which remained unplanted. By 1914, Agent Hall reported 13,260 acres of cultivated allotments, but these statistics by themselves are deceiving. Utes, with the aid of agency employees, actually cultivated only 6,147 acres (46%) on 222 allotments (16% of the total number of allotments), but they did not plant all of that land; white lessees worked 7,113 acres (54%); and 68,869 allotted acres (84%) remained idle. Leasing became a common and, in some cases, preferred method of using the land for many Ute allottees despite the opposition of conservative tribal leaders who argued that it would only bring in more whites to cheat them. As early as 1905, one Agricultural Extension agent noted that, "The present prevailing custom is for the Indian owner to employ a white man to run the farm, paying him a definite share of the products." Even though there were frequent disagreements between Indian landlord and white tenant, many Utes found this a comfortable way to gain a subsistence, please agents concerned with agricultural statistics, and avoid the agricultural responsibilities which tied them to their allotments.²⁹

Ute attitudes towards their allotments and farming frustrated government officials who expected the Utes to embrace the Protestant work-ethic and become self-supporting farmers. In addition to lease moneys and the rations most Ute families continued to draw, Utes received a small income from a successful claims case settled in 1910. Superintendent Albert H. Kneale lamented this "unearned" income and observed that the Utes were, "wholly content to make their living expenses conform to this income, so there is little occasion to perform manual labor." Other officials noted that despite allotment, few Ute families actually lived on their own allotments, preferring instead to live in extended groups on a single plot. Many Utes worked their allotments intermittently, leaving them unattended in mid-season to grow as they would.

Officials struggled to get even a slight majority of the Utes to live in proper log or frame houses, and then not to use them as stables for their horses or to destroy those structures according to traditional mortuary practices. Agency officials also recognized the Ute resistance to a white economic and social lifestyle embodied in their practice of the Sun Dance, their traditional Bear Dance, and Peyotism, and attempted (unsuccessfully) to suppress these gatherings.³⁰

In addition, government officials recognized more practical obstacles to successful agriculture on the allotted Uintah-Ouray Reservation -- obstacles which contributed to the continued economic dependency of the Ute people. First, Ute farmers lacked the necessary capital to purchase adequate agricultural equipment or to improve their allotments. Few were willing to go into debt to purchase modern steam and gas-powered equipment given the meager economic returns of farming. Through the 1920s they relied mainly on older horse-drawn implements of inferior quality loaned from or purchased through the agency. Second, even with irrigation the environment of the Uintah Basin limited agricultural possibilities. The short growing season and thin rocky soil limited the types of crops grown and their yields. Erosion and the accumulation of alkali in the soil from improper irrigation and drainage irreparably damaged many Ute fields. Irrigation water in adequate quantities never reached some of the allotted fields, and other allotments, chosen by Utes specifically for their non-agricultural grazing qualities, never could produce crops. Third, the lack of adequate numbers of agency farmers familiar with the realities and methods of western irrigation and dry farming hindered the agricultural advancement of the Utes. The Ute agency maintained an average of four farmers and one stockman through the 1920s, but the physical distances of the reservation and their own bureaucratic responsibilities limited the agency farmers' ability to provide adequate agricultural supervision and instruction.³¹

Aside from Indian resistance to farming, the biggest single hindrance to the creation of an economically successful agrarian order among the Northern Utes in the twentieth century was the lack of ready markets for their produce. Like other reservations, the Uintah-Ouray Reservation was physically isolated and economically removed from the mainstream of the American marketplace and the expansion of corporate capitalism. The Uintah-Ouray Agency was about 120 miles from the nearest railroad and regional market in Salt Lake City. Construction of mining railroads pushed to within sixty miles of the agency in the early twentieth century, but high freight rates kept Ute forage and grain crops uncompetitive in the national market. Until the 1910s, the lack of outside markets was not a problem since what little the Utes produced in surplus -- mainly hay, oats, and wheat -- they traded to the agency or military post at Fort Duchesne. Ute farmers lost a major market in 1912 when Fort Duchesne closed, and the increased production from irrigated Ute farms and white homesteads in the 1910s threatened to flood the local markets and drive down prices paid for farm produce.³²

Despite all these problems, the period between 1912 and 1928 was the high point for agriculture among the Northern Utes. In 1912, 66 percent (176) of the adult males held farms averaging 32 cultivated acres which they leased or worked. Mixed-bloods or Uintah Utes were more likely to farm than the others. Between 1915 and 1928 Indian and white farmers discovered the potential of the isolated Uintah Basin for producing new genetic strains of alfalfa seed for the national market, and production increased. Agricultural fairs and Farm Chapter clubs in the 1910s and 1920s stimulated agricultural production and competition

between Utes already interested in farming, and encouraged others to begin or improve their own garden plots. By 1920, 79 percent (218) of the able adult males cultivated an average of 41 acres each, although they actually planted less than half that acreage or leased it to whites. Alfalfa and hardy grain crops comprised 95 percent of Ute crops, with most of that produce consumed locally by Ute livestock. By 1928, irrigation advisers Porter J. Preston and Charles A. Engle reported that the Utes irrigated 15,243 acres and did "more farming... than the Indians of any other reservation." Nevertheless, white lessees actually worked a considerable share of that land, and annual farm income ranged from only \$200 to \$300 per Ute family. Farming at Uintah-Ouray remained largely a subsistence enterprise, with cash generated mainly through alfalfa seed sales and leasing. The alfalfa seed boom responsible for involving more Utes in commercial agriculture peaked by 1925. Declining prices paid for seed, insect plagues, bad weather years, and heavy water assessments cut into Ute production, profits, and ultimately Ute farming itself.³³

The national economic depression of the 1930s and certain environmental limitations stopped the expansion of Ute agriculture cold. Almost as soon as the commercial potential of alfalfa seed developed, it collapsed under the weight of national market forces and environmental realities. Erosion from poor cultivation methods and over-grazing, the over-extension of water resources, small farm size, and inefficient irrigation practices in the late 1920s combined to lengthen and deepen the depression in the Uintah Basin. One agency farmer noted in 1932 that most of the remaining 169 Ute farmers were "making a living" by simply "existing" on their farms. By the mid-1930s, cultivation on Ute allotments dropped 42 percent from 1930 levels, and yields on those acres declined by fifty percent. Leasing became nearly impossible, yet the bills for water assessments and reimbursable loan payments continued, forcing many Utes to sell their land to the new Northern Ute Tribal Council (established under the Indian Reorganization Act). By 1936, nearly every Ute family depended on relief rations distributed by the agency.³⁴

A few Ute farmers tried to cultivate their land in the 1940s, but by the 1950s most Utes forsook their fields and livestock to live on unearned income from oil and gas royalties, agricultural leases, and federal claims case payments. Unable to compete with white farmers who out-produced them on the same land, Utes resumed leasing a majority of their irrigable lands -- as much as 78 percent in 1950. By 1956 there were only 37 Ute farmers, and between 1958 and 1964 observers noted only eleven individuals doing any farming. Aside from the activities of several Ute family and the maintenance of some alfalfa crops to feed the tribal cattle herd, virtually no farming is carried out by the Northern Utes today.³⁵

Ranching had the potential of becoming a more significant agricultural enterprise among the Northern Utes in the twentieth century, but the division of the reservation into small allotments and the loss of the best grazing lands in the Strawberry Valley limited its success. Ute agents encouraged the Utes to reduce their large horse herds on the 250,000 acres grazing reserve and to replace them with cattle and sheep, but with little immediate success. In the 1910s and 1920s, increased alfalfa production and income from per-capita claims case payments sparked an expansion of the livestock industry. By 1923, Ute stockmen owned about 4,000 cattle, 6,500 sheep, and over 5,000 horses despite a fifty percent livestock loss during the winter of 1919-20. In the late 1920s, Ute stockmen, particularly Uncompahgre Utes, shifted production from cattle to sheep when they found that sheep provided more rapid annual returns in the form of

wool and meat than did cattle, especially on the increasingly over-grazed rangeland. Ute livestock production peaked in 1932 with 3,546 cattle and 14,850 sheep, but over-grazing, the reduction of alfalfa production, and depressed market prices for livestock led to deep herd reductions in the 1930s and 1940s. During the 1950s, larger per-capita claims payments and royalty incomes decreased Ute interest in ranching and splintered their livestock associations. In the 1960s the tribe organized a tribal cattle enterprise which continues to date, but it has never proven very profitable nor has it provided a significant number of jobs.³⁶

CONCLUSION

The history of farming on the Uintah-Ouray Reservation is one example of how federal Indian policies, the national farm economy, environmental limitations, and Indian cultural responses combined to create an economically dependent situation for an Indian tribe. This history is case-specific for the Northern Utes, but it mirrors the agricultural experiences of many other western Native American groups, and illuminates many contributory factors in the progression of independent hunter-gathers from subsistence self-sufficiency to economic dependency.

The Ute people experienced the first stages of economic dependency when Mormon settlers entered their territory and began competing with the Utes for their land and subsistence resources. Utes soon found that they could exploit new resources -- Mormon cattle, crops, and agency rations -- but at the ultimate cost of war and removal to the Uintah Basin. In both Colorado and Utah, Utes resisted the culturally-unacceptable practice of agriculture as long as they could find traditional subsistence resources, obtain rations, or get white agency employees to work the land for them. Ute agents frequently complained of Ute resistance to farming or to their propensity for "intermittent" labor. These forms of resistance were Ute attempts to reproduce their subsistence system with its mixed resource use, its sexual division of labor, and its balance of intense periods of work followed by leisure time within the framework of reservation agriculture. But as the political and environmental bounds of their reservation world closed in upon them the Utes became more dependent on rations and then later on leasing as subsistence alternatives to agricultural labor.

Federal policies mandating allotment and the construction of an expensive irrigation system sealed the economic fate of the Ute people and limited the potential success of other economic endeavors, including a more promising livestock industry. In the long term, Ute passive resistance to allotted agriculture and the revitalization movement of the Sun Dance served to reproduce and strengthen their cultural identity as Nuciu, The People, but it also contributed to their ultimate economic dependency. Some Utes intentionally chose non-agricultural lands. Many Utes chose leasing as a culturally rational alternative to actual agricultural labor, but leasing itself created a dependent relationship -- dependence on white lessees and their ability to make the lands yield. Even those Utes who farmed for themselves remained dependent on agency farmers and agency implements to work the land, and on government installations in the Uintah Basin to purchase their produce. The environmental realities of the Uintah Basin -- climate, topography, soils, and water -- limited the potential success of Ute farming. Isolation from transportation sources, outside markets, and the lack of marketable crops enforced an economy geared

towards subsistence, inter-group exchange, and the limited demands of local trade. Almost as soon as Ute farmers found a marketable crop and expanded into outside markets, they fell victim to the collapse of the national farm economy. After years of both resistance to and then failure in farming, Utes accepted the ultimate economy of dependence -- per-capita income from claims cases, leases, and natural resource royalties.

In hindsight it is easy to see why agriculture alone offered Indian peoples in the western United States little more than short-term subsistence and long-term economic dependence. First, the majority of Indian groups had little agricultural experience or did not limit their subsistence system to agriculture alone. Of those who did farm, none did so in a manner consonant with Anglo-American conceptions of proper agriculture, even though their adaptations frequently proved more suitable to their environment. In teaching Indians to farm on their various reservations the government failed to provide quality agricultural equipment in adequate quantities or instruction suited to Indian needs and environments. In some cases, agency farmers did the work for Indian farmers in order to bolster agricultural statistics, or confined their activities to demonstration fields with techniques and implements not available to Indian farmers.

Second, in most cases reservations in the West were physically isolated and sometimes hostile environments with marginal agricultural potential, unwanted by early white settlers. Even experienced white farmers found it difficult to work the same lands successfully. In many cases, the lack of readily accessible water resources limited successful agriculture until the government constructed expensive irrigation systems and wells. In some cases white officials pushed farming over ranching on land better suited for grazing until the division and alienation of land ruined both enterprises.

Third, most reservations were too distant from transportation facilities to be competitive in more than local or regional markets. Without sufficient cash markets Indian farmers found it difficult or impossible to raise money for the capital improvements needed to make their farms productive without selling the land that was their greatest asset. Government reimbursable loans and reimbursable irrigation construction costs created debts which piled up during lean years and ate up profits during successful years.

Fourth, reservations fostered dependent economies almost from the beginning. The lands assigned to many western tribes represented only a fraction of their aboriginal territory with its familiar subsistence resources and cycles, thus depriving them of traditional foods and activities. Rations became an immediate subsistence resource for dislocated Indian groups, and later became an alternative to both work and starvation as Indians and white trespassers depleted the natural food resources of the reservation environment. Government rations by themselves seldom constituted a sufficient or balanced diet, and many agents withheld rations from those Indians who would not work. As Indians spent more time working garden patches or farms which did not produce adequate food they necessarily decreased their time spent searching for traditional foods or seeking wage work, thereby reinforcing their dependency on rations.

Fifth, western agriculture itself upset traditional Indian subsistence systems with their safety-net approach based on layers and diversity in subsistence resources to avoid starvation should any one fail, with their sexual division of labor, and with their balance between periods of intense work and leisure time for cultural continuity and elaboration. Western farming did not allow such a

schedule and tied Indians to a single subsistence pursuit subject to periodic failure. Agriculture also upset cultural norms of leadership based on subsistence specialization, of land and resources use, kinship residence patterns, religious observances and taboos based on food, and the social organization of labor. Most western Indian groups could not accept white agriculture without renouncing many of their cultural observances, and so they resisted or attempted to subvert the program by reproducing traditional structures, categories, and ecological adaptations within the new framework. Such resistance further limited the potential success of reservation agriculture.

Finally, agriculture as a national economic pursuit underwent periodic crises -- boom and bust cycles resulting from environmental and market forces beyond the control of individual farmers, white or Indian. Federal Indian policies such as allotment launched Indians into agriculture on small plots of land at the very time white farmers found it necessary to expand their farm size, increase the intensity of their cultivation with power farm equipment, and cooperatively market their produce in order to survive. Since the depression of the 1930s, American agriculture in general has become increasingly corporate and, at the same time, increasingly dependent on government subsidies.

In the 1920s and 1930s the Indian Bureau abandoned the individualistic policy of allotment and in the 1940s and 1950s tried to encourage cooperative tribal farming enterprises. Despite the efforts of Indian Bureau officials, they could not restore Indian confidence in a successful agricultural existence after years of resistance and failure. More importantly, they could do little to restore alienated Indian lands and consolidate fragmented individual and tribal land holdings. Officials hoped that some of the money from claims case settlements would be used to create some form of reservation economic development. But in many cases the per-capita distribution of those funds, as well as of leases and resource royalties, has only contributed to Indian economic dependency. The immediate needs of individual tribal members and the realities of tribal politics have combined to create tribal governments which serve to redistribute group resources rather than to create them -- in effect, reproducing traditional group functions and economic values in a transformed socio-political environment which ultimately reinforces economic dependency as a way of life.

Since the 1950s, few western Indian tribes have established successful agricultural operations on a scale large enough to support their members -- nor should they be expected to given the realities of the modern agricultural situation and the potential for other types of industrial development. In effect they would be trading one dependent economy for another. As well intentioned as the agricultural policies of the federal government were, and however rational they appeared at the time for Indians whose one real asset was land, those policies ultimately contributed to the poverty and economic dependency so prevalent on Indian reservations in the West today.

ABBREVIATIONS

<u>ARCIA</u>	<u>Annual Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs</u>	
CIA	Commissioner of Indian Affairs	
FARC-D	Federal Archive and Record Center, Denver,	Colorado
GPO	Government Printing Office	
LR	Letters Received	
LS	Letters Sent	
NA	National Archives, Washington D.C.	
RG 75	Record Group 75, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Central Correspondence Files	
ser.	U.S. Serial Set	
SI	Secretary of the Interior	
Stats.	<u>United States Statutes at Large</u>	
<u>Supt.</u>	<u>Superintendent</u>	
<u>U&O</u>	<u>Uintah and Ouray Agency</u>	
<u>U.S.</u>	<u>United States Reports</u>	

END NOTES

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OVERCOMING ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY; INDIAN AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE

Diane Rothenberg
Department of Anthropology
State University of New York-Binghamton

We have been asked to address the issue of whether the history of Indian economies has been a story of people attempting to overcome dependency. I believe that the papers we have just heard, that by Dr. Lewis describing the experience of the Utes over time and that by Dr. Carlson analyzing the increasing success of efforts at agriculture until governmental policy produced negative changes which impeded further effort, lead us to conclude that, whatever the attempts were by Native Americans toward economic self-sufficiency and control, they had little control over outcomes because they had little control over input. Decisions were made for them and not with them. Their futures were manipulated either by rapacious white men engaged in a continual process of extraction or reduction of Native resources or by reforming white men committed to a culturally determined universalist view of appropriate goals and the method of achieving those goals. The evidence provided by Dr. Lewis and Dr. Carlson have supported my own research observations in a study of the interaction of Quakers and Seneca Indians of the early 19th century¹ that white proposals for the pursuit of agriculture among Native Americans were as much or more ideological than economic, oriented more to complete socio-cultural transformations conceived in the abstract rather than with reference to the particularities of the group and their specific conditions for which economic solutions should have been designed.

It is also tempting to believe that with Indian pacification accomplished, the programs for advancing agriculture as a solution to the future of Native Americans are linked with a perception of Native American economic irrelevancy. When Indians were important suppliers to the fur trade, they were encouraged to continue this activity. When they constituted a market for Euro-American goods, they were encouraged to be consumers. Whether gift giving was a kind of conspiracy designed to generate markets for the future sale of traders' goods or whether it was a generous gesture on the part of white negotiators who were responding to Indian expectations, the giving of gifts developed needs and desires in Native American communities which had not existed prior to white contact. These needs were sometimes trivial, e.g. the "baubles" that Indians were supposed to crave, or pernicious, e.g. liquor, but many of these needs were essentials, such as guns and ammunition when enemies had them, or metal items when the previous technology had disappeared. The needs might not have been excessive and they might not have been continuous, but their satisfaction required some method of address either through donation or purchase. An expectation of donation was condemned by whites as dependency and the ability to purchase entailed having something to sell that someone wanted to buy.

After defeat and relocation on treaty-established land, Indian importance lay in the obstacles they presented to the growing nation, not in what they could potentially contribute. They consumed wealth, particularly in the form of land committed by treaty allocations, but they were never taken seriously as potential producers of wealth. Their labor was not exploited; it was ignored. As

Carlson has so systematically analyzed elsewhere,² the needs of local whites conditioned decisions regarding Native populations, not only, I would suggest, because local whites were active in the political process as Native peoples could not be, but also because the activities of whites were seen as relevant to national interests and the non-militant activities of Indians were not. The Indians constituted an embarrassment and an inconvenience. National policy supported whatever move would insure that Indians would consume as few national resources as possible, cause as little embarrassment as possible, with the hope that they might eventually disappear as identifiable populations.

The policy of doing as little as possible for the Indians while rendering them as little trouble as possible was established shortly after the Revolutionary War when "civilization" rather than "conquest" was advocated as a more convenient and less expensive program for pacifying Indians. For the federal government it offered a way to constrict Indian lands and make land available for sale to settlers, thus providing much needed funds while satisfying white expansion demands. Agriculture, which invariably meant agriculture by men, was a key element in the civilization policy which intended to eliminate hunting as an aspect of subsistence and render moot the need for hunting land.

The goal as stated was to transform Indian societies to a condition that was recognized as "civilized," out of a condition that was called "barbaric" or "savage." The definitional condition of civilization was private property, property held in fee simple, an arrangement not found among any Native groups for whom the meaning of access to particular land might vary, as Dr. Carlson has so ably discussed and demonstrated for us, but for whom the meaning never was what was subsumed under fee simple holdings. Agriculture by men was seen as leading directly to a commitment to fee simple holdings because, it was reasoned that a labor investment a man would make to "his" land would develop an enthusiasm for establishing singular title to it so that it could be inherited by male heirs. The land was to be worked for the benefit of the nuclear family in which females would engage in those tasks which lead to a "refinement of behavior" following Euro-American models and in which upward mobility through economic acquisition was a fundamental expectation. Indians and whites alike recognized that a shift in economic strategies would entail radical transformations of Indian society and associated culture, but whereas the whites envisioned the changes as positive, among the Indians they were widely understood to entail losses against which the benefits were problematic and unpredictable. How any individual within a group evaluated the costs versus the benefits of committing to change in conformity to white programs varied and, as Dr. Carlson has called to our attention, frequently did not vary along the lines that "traditionalist" versus "progressive" has come to suggest, and particularly not with reference to the acceptance or rejection of agriculture. These terms have been used evocatively by Indians and whites alike, but we need to be careful when we assume a fixed content for what are frequently content changing categories.

My own research concerned one of the earliest experiments in carrying out the civilization policy. In 1798 the Quakers were invited by Allegany Seneca Indians of western New York to establish a mission. The problems and failures of that project would reappear in the future, but the lessons were not learned and were not used to modify programs, strategies or goals, neither by the Quakers at that time, nor by reformers in the future. A paradigm of development was established which would be stubbornly adhered to until its radical rethinking during the New Deal. The Quaker missionaries were not

cynical about the potential success of the civilization policy. They believed that, with a little assistance and a little instruction, they would facilitate that rapid social transformation which would allow the Indian to be incorporated into the national polity. Dr. Clyde A. Milner³ has described the experience of Quaker missionaries in Nebraska in the 1870's; their task, their expectations, their procedures and their disappointments. The seventy years which transpired between "my" Quakers and "his," added no dimension of understanding to the problems and limitations of their engagement with Native Americans, nor called into question the value of their goal.

The Quakers were ideal candidates to facilitate the government's program and to mediate for the Senecas. They were advocates of peace, they were sincere and diligent, and they were willing to undertake the project at their own expense. They were also committed to a strategy which did not include religious conversion, not, I must remark, because they had enormous respect for religious variation, but because they were an exclusive sect with membership a function of birthright. Christianity and civilization were inextricably connected but, whereas other missionaries advocated accomplishing civilization through Christianity, the Quakers prioritized civilization.

The Quakers had a brief missionary experience with the Oneidas which lasted for only two years. The Oneidas, who were in the middle of a rapidly expanding white population, were distracted, to say the least, by the presence of white settlers all around them and were not prepared to attend to the Quakers' advice and instruction. By contrast, the Allegany Senecas seemed an ideal group with which to work. They were isolated in the mountainous area of western New York, closed off, for the time being, from white expansion. This largely secured them from white influence, but it prevented them from selling what they produced and made the possibility of selling agricultural surpluses problematic. Because Native Americans have been more or less cash dependent since their first experiences with European trade goods, any program for encouraging the production of agricultural surplus that did not include a consideration of markets and access to those markets was bound to fail. The fiction of the self-sufficient yeoman producing all of the requirements of life through his own diligence on his own small independent holding provided the model for those agrarian idealists who were charged with the transformation of Native American societies, but the land developers who were structuring what they hoped would be viable white communities were warning that the agrarian idealist vision was not viable in the changing world of 19th century America.

The Senecas in 1798 were in a transitional situation. Having been on the losing side of the Revolutionary War they were in a very disadvantageous position to resist governmental moves to reduce their land, and the Allegany Senecas were awaiting the establishment of their newly created reservation boundaries. In spite of this, they were self sufficient, generating their own food and meeting their own cash needs through trade of skins and fur, but access to markets was a problem. In order to trade, seasonal trips had to be made by canoe to Pittsburgh down river and these trips resulted in much community disruption because of drunkenness. It must be noted, though, that the community had already taken steps to prohibit alcohol consumption before the Quakers arrived.

The Quaker-Seneca interaction that I am describing occurred only a decade after the creation of the United States when the federal government was a relatively weak force and the Senecas, although they had been defeated as allies of the British could envision the possibility that they could remain autonomous

and self-sufficient if they acceded to the demand for an initial land contraction. They clearly recognized that they would have to make some adjustments to change, and their representatives requested that farmers, traders and teachers be sent to prepare them for the changes they accepted as inevitable. The immediate problem they faced was two-fold: the first was to obtain access to necessary trade goods; and the second was to secure legitimate and trusted representation with the white power establishment. The presence of the Quakers was supposed to address both of these problems. Because they needed the Quakers, the Senecas were willing to negotiate differences which repeatedly arose. What was finally not negotiable was the Quaker insistence that the reservation be allotted, a proposal advanced by them as a way of protecting Seneca lands from the attack of land company claims. The Senecas predicted that such a strategy would result in final land loss through the sale by individuals of lands they held in fee simple and, with the loss of the land base, would come the loss of their subsistence base and of themselves as a social unit with cultural differences that they valued. They successfully resisted all efforts to allot the reservation. Quaker attempts to transform Seneca society by intervention in adult behavior ceased at this point, although they continued to address the education of children and to provide earnest assistance in the on-going problems that the Senecas had with land developers.

The Quaker program contained all the elements which recycle again and again through the history of the programs designed to "advance" the Indian through agriculture and social transformation. I use the word advance advisedly, because these are programs founded on the notion of stages of progress that we associate with evolutionary thinkers later in the nineteenth century, and whose models of stages of progress were a significant part of the intellectual, i.e. cultural, climate of white program designers. The key concept in the program was that of private property which was definitionally tied to civilization. The program, which was to lead gradually to a commitment to private property, required that men be tied to a parcel of land to be worked for the benefit of the nuclear family and to be inherited by sons. The nuclear family was the unit of concern, and its upward mobility through economic acquisition was a fundamental expectation.

Whereas the Utes were minimally committed to the growing of crops in their pre-reservation experience, so that agriculture was a relatively novel adjustment for them, the Senecas had a proven record of prior agricultural success. When General Sullivan marched through New York State burning fields and orchards during the Revolutionary War, reports are that the soldiers were astonished at the productivity of the Indian lands. But, as we know, it was Seneca women who were responsible for that domain of activity, assisted by men during field preparation to be sure, but fundamentally in charge of the production and distribution of agricultural products. In spite of white conceits to the contrary, the vast majority of New World populations had successful agricultural strategies, but these were, as we have so often been told, part of total and successful adjustments in which rational divisions of labor addressed total social requirements. A division of labor which was unfamiliar to the whites inevitably met with their disapproval, so that successful agricultural productivity by women was rejected as a viable strategy and all efforts were directed to orienting men to substitute for women in crop production. In the Seneca case, men were willing to experiment with agriculture only at those times when the Quakers were willing to meet trade good needs, and they sought other strategies to generate cash for purchases when the Quakers were unwilling to meet those

needs. My evidence indicates that both men and women were open and responsive to what the Quakers had to show them, but they accepted or rejected novel elements according to a rational cost-benefit analysis.

The Quakers were never willing to accept the possibility of rational Seneca opposition. The Quaker explanation was that all rejections were based on their "habits of mind" i.e. their culture, and hence were irrational and obstructionist. It is clear that the process of rational decision making by any human includes recourse to that prior experience conditioned by culture, and this is as true for rational Indians as it is for rational whites. On the other hand, the assertion that Indian men irrationally rejected agriculture because it was culturally unfamiliar and that Indian women exerted a particularly conservative pressure to keep men from agriculture is called into real question by the evidence of the Senecas, of the Utes described by Dr. Lewis, and of those many societies noted by Dr. Carlson to have progressively engaged successfully in agriculture. The current strategy of some anthropologists to analytically isolate culture as a self-contained ideational system obscures and distorts the interactive relationship of culture, social group and complex environment that includes other cultures and other social groups as well as the natural environment. Native American societies were not static and culturally unchanging before reservations were established. They were responsive systems in which cultural meanings were adjusted by changing circumstances and they continue to be changing and responsive as are all socio-cultural systems. Whatever the culturally generated resistance might have been to male agriculture, Seneca males tried their hands at it almost immediately. Similarly, Dr. Lewis tells us that the Utes were 20%-30% agriculturalists and wage laborers, presumably mainly in agricultural work, by the 1890's, and Dr. Carlson documents the widespread acceptance and increasing success of male agriculture before the negative conditions generated by the passage of the Dawes Act.

Dr. Lewis' reference to the agent's claim that the Utes had an excess of horses puts me in mind of similar complaints by the Quakers with reference to the Senecas. The Senecas had some livestock before the Quakers arrived, and the Quakers supplied them with some additional animals. Although the Quakers complained that livestock was neglected during the winter when the men were away hunting, they also complained that they had more horses than were of any use to them. I had considered the possibility that horses might have been used in lumbering, which, of course, the Quakers regarded as a totally distracting and inappropriate activity, and this was, to my delight, confirmed by the Seneca name for horse which translates as "it hauls logs." Similarly when the Ute agent describes the use to which horses were, in part, put "to continue their seasonal hunting and visiting patterns instead of staying home to farm," we might be justified in supposing that this judgment was a result of white cultural bias and to be alerted to a need to understand the cultural context of both whites and Indians in these interactions. Unfortunately our documentation comes almost exclusively through white channels, but our sensitivity to the bias that orients these reports has increased and is reflected in the new ways that records are being reexplored.

Part of the effect of that white cultural bias had been to describe the traditional sexual division of labor as disadvantageous for women and excessively permissive for men. The reports by the Ute's agent of hunting and visiting by men are clearly meant to suggest irresponsibility with no understanding of the flexibility that both of these activities offered to the Ute as an economically marginal people. Their hunting is self-evidently subsistence

related, and we remember that the agent urged them to hunt when agriculture failed through natural disaster. But the strategy of horizontal mobility entailed in the maintenance of extended networks is subsistence related as well. I do not want to suggest that those calculations entered consciously in the process of maintaining ties of kinship and friendship, *butties of kinship and friendship are very useful to economically marginal people. The responsiveness to the obligation of such ties, the cultural expectation of giving and sharing, frequently inhibits the accumulation of capital and the vertical mobility of the individual that were being promoted by whites as an ultimate good, but it provides an insurance against disaster. The Quakers and Senecas disagreed about the advantage of isolating individual families and about the related issues of hospitality and reciprocity. When the Senecas moved onto the newly created reservation, the Quakers urged that they create separated farms. Most of the Senecas chose, instead, to move as a village, where interaction and mutual assistance would be more easily available. When the Quakers repeatedly advised a reduction of hospitality and generosity, the Senecas finally announced that the Quakers could do as they chose in this regard but as for themselves, they would continue to abide by their traditional practice. That traditional practice, an aspect of culture to be sure, also provided a measure of security for those who needed assistance as well as for those whom the Quakers condemned as "idlers."

Following Dr. Carlson's analysis, I think it is fair to say that the history of post-conquest Native American agriculture reveals that the advice and actions of white society produced impediments that made agriculture an impossible route toward independence and self-sufficiency. The agricultural promise was that Indians could enter into the market relations available to white farmers, but their ability to compete in this arena was impacted by a variety of factors including not only their own lack of preparation for efficient commercial farming, but also their lack of access to markets, continual land reductions and lack of access to capital. A viable low-level subsistence could be achieved by food production activities by a segment of the society and serendipitous and flexible cash production activities by another segment. In many cases women and children constituted the first and men the second of these divisions. This adjustment was necessarily supplemented by emergency provisions from federal agencies, by annuity payments, and by the manipulation of local resources through selling and leasing. For those groups whose land contains valuable resources, leasing rights to land and resources could prove a route away from poverty and the problem, it seems to me, is not that this income is "unearned", but that the interests of Native Americans have not been sufficiently protected in these transactions.

An analysis of the past is useful not only to understand what went wrong, but also to assist in anticipating the future. And the question remains whether agriculture is available as a viable route toward overcoming dependency in the future. If it is, it probably cannot be on the model urged in the past of the nuclear family farm which, regardless of how we may feel about that as a social structure, seems problematic in the contemporary economic scheme. Clearly if Native Americans are to re-explore agriculture as an economic possibility, it must be on the basis of market involvement, and within the opportunities and constraints that the tribal system offers. This time around the goals and structures would have to be internally generated, needed advice and assistance sought not imposed, and impediments recognized and reduced with the cooperation of relevant agencies of the larger society of which reservation

communities are a part. What needs finally to be addressed is how Native Americans can achieve a "good life" within their own definition of the term.

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COMMENTS ABOUT THE DECLINE OF INDIAN INVOLVEMENT IN AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

Dr. Bahe Billy

We all seem to be in agreement about this subject. Maybe we went to the same school or were educated in the same way. For me to have a contrary opinion, therefore, would be almost impossible. Still, my experiences and training give me a perspective to use for my comments.

Leonard Carlson identifies a variety of underlying factors that have contributed to the decline of Indian agriculture and ranching. His findings indicate that Native American farmers were quite successful before the enactment and implementation of the Dawes Act, which shattered many Indian reservations and a direct effect on agricultural reduction.

Overall, Carlson identifies other factors for the decline as the national agricultural economy, inconsistent Federal policies, reservation isolation, and adverse climate.

David Lewis similarly identified factors such as federal Indian policies, the national economy, environmental physical constraints, and cultural differences.

One contributing factor which must be emphasized is tribal payments to individuals.¹ These monies, from successful court cases against the Federal Government since the 1950's, have drastically altered the life style of Ute Indians then, now, and the future.

Today, two important events associated with agriculture are in progress in Ute country. The first of these is a plan to settle water rights between two Ute Tribes and the state of Colorado. When an agreement is accepted by all interested groups, this will allow the Ute Mountain Tribe to receive water from the Dolores Irrigation Project and the Southern Utes to access water from the Animas--La Plata Irrigation Project.

The Ute Mountain Tribe at Towaoc, Colorado, are descendants of the Utes at Ignacio, Colorado.² This group of Utes, earlier, decided not to take up allotted land and broke away from the main group. Their reservation is in a trust status. The people have had limited exposure to outside forces. There are presently about 1100 people. Tribal members have limited experience in irrigation and in ranching.

In contrast, the Southern Utes with about the same population will probably benefit more from this exchange since they have experience in farming and ranching.

Because of the high risks involved in starting, developing and operating an irrigation project, Utes and other Tribes must ask themselves the following questions: Do they really want irrigation? Is the Tribe committed? Is there really enough water available to finish the overall project? What is the quantity and quality of the manpower of the Tribe? Where are the markets and how close are they? Is there extra water available for food processing industries? Does the Tribe have the income or reserve funds to finish the project if it becomes necessary? Is low cost energy available and how close are they? Is the economy of the reservation such that it can benefit from the development? What are the trade offs? What is the track record of the developers? What kind and types of funds are available for start up, operations, and to continue the project? Is the project close to a town or isolated? How good are the soils? Are the National Bureaus, State, and Tribe as equally committed? Are capital goods available close by to operate farms?

In addition to asking questions ahead of time, the history of a particular irrigation project can be studied; for example, the start and development of the Navajo Indian Irrigation Project (NIIP) and the operations of the Navajo Agricultural Product Industry (NAPI) to envision fully what it takes to start a large farming operation on the reservation. This project is only (approximately) half completed and Federal funding is down to three million a year, only enough to develop about 2000 acres per year. Recently, the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs⁵ recommended termination of the NIIP project for several reasons: 1) the high cost to complete the project, 2) questionable availability of water to complete the overall project, 3) management problems and lack of profit by NAPI farming operations, and 4) lack of inexpensive energy to farm and to operate the irrigation systems.

The Utes have no alternative to irrigation agriculture development. Members of the Colorado River Compact⁶ are opposed to selling or leasing Ute water. Even if the Utes were willing to sell or lease water, there is no law that would permit them to do so.

Another incentive to encourage Native American agriculture was public law 99-190.⁷ This law appropriated \$6,000,000 to purchase feed to mitigate drought stricken Indian lands in Montana and in North and South Dakota. To get the law approved, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) had tribes formulate a proposal to address future droughts and to establish a strong program to support agriculture on reservations.

To implement public law 99-190, an organization called the National Indian Agriculture Working Group (NIAWG) was formed. NIAWG has already implemented the drought program, concluded open meetings on reservations, published a report on agriculture, and helped formed the Intertribal Agriculture Council (IAC). The IAC⁸ will network the Native American Tribes to work together on areas of concern, and to exchange ideas and information relevant to land, water, and agricultural product industries.

The report published by NIAWG highlights modern reservation agriculture, livestock, and dryland grain farming in the Northern Great Plains; intense production of high value table crops and citrus fruit under irrigation in the Southwest; and fruit, nut, vegetable, hop, and small grain production in the Pacific Northwest. Tribes are also involved in agri-businesses such as meat packing, hydroponics, greenhouses, nut orchards, farm and ranching, and leasing frame and ranches to outsiders.

A significant fact enumerated in the NIAG report is that farming and ranching provides the primary source of entrepreneurial opportunities to 33,572 individuals and tribal enterprises.

Negative observations on reservations are shifts in the Bureau of Indian Affairs's priorities, an ever increasing number of idle farm lands, foreclosure of farms and ranches, a lack of long term funds, profit motives, and long distances to markets. There was also uncertainty in legal and contractual matters. While the statistics in the NIAWG report indicate that there are many positive agriculture programs, Native American agriculturists are not all having similar success farming on reservations. Reservation farmers and ranchers are as at risk as other in agriculture businesses.

Whether the two organizations, NIAWG and IAG, will help the Utes with their irrigation project depends on how established these two organizations are, how well the Utes can work with both groups, and how much technical support they can provide the Utes. The biggest factor will be the effort that the Utes are willing to put into their projects.

Navajo agriculture suffers from similar problems.

The four types of Navajo farms are: large corporation, cooperative farm, individual, and family gardens.

NAPI is patterned like a corporation. According to NAPI management, the farm is starting to make net returns.⁹

There is one cooperative farm at Many Farms, Arizona. It was established over a period of 12 years but is not operating now. This farm has about 1800 acres but, when it was operating in 1985, there were approximately 3800 acres was under cultivation.

A land and livestock cooperative called Tse-Zhin was established by grassroots operators in 1986. The organization has met opposition from the Navajo Tribe, in spite of an excellent plan.¹⁰

The smaller individual farms operate like off-reservation farms except their land is held in trust.

The garden farms are operated by individuals or by related families. In most cases, the produce is used 100% by the operators.

NAPI has its own irrigation department which works with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) in regulating water and the BIA to fund the irrigation operation and maintain canals. In contrast, the rest of the Navajo irrigation systems are either operated by the Division of Water Resources of the tribe or users. Because the tribe operates the water system, the local water users have limited control over either water sources or the tribal water department. The chapter, the political unit for the reservation, elects land board members who deal with the politicians to get action for local users.

John Leeper¹¹ states that the most frequent explanations given for poor Indian irrigation systems are: small farm size, lack of maintenance, funding, technology, incentives, credit, education, and institutional disputes over water rights. The data that Mr. Leeper analyzes show that the farmers who were successful in the Cudei irrigation district were those located near the head of the irrigation system rather than those at the end. Location on the canal gives greater water control, which provides success.

Overcoming some of the economic dependency through agriculture development on the Navajo Reservation is a real challenge. NAPI is making an impact on tribal economy and it will eventually provide a food basket for the people in the Southwest. The small farms, in contrast, are either going to go into domestic use, become idle, or be incorporated into larger farms. Because a typical Navajo farm is small, it has limited working capital, trained manpower, equipment, and management expertise. My suggestion would be first to look at each site to determine the costs it would take to farm it from the least to highest, and take the least cost as the priority to work on until it can stand on its own, and then move to the next site. The available resources would limit the choices. The farm cooperative must be given a chance to work along with other farming organizations.

In addition, I would suggest the following ten (10) items be considered in any reservation irrigation development. 1) The location of the farming and ranching operations is very important with respect to the nine (9) distinct national regions,¹² each with their own politics, economic, cultural values, future growth potential, climate, and environmental conditions. The Navajo land is located in the Empty Quarter where raw resources have to be shipped out and refined products have to be shipped in. A knowledge of what's in your farming region can help to develop your farming and ranching operations to take advantage of products to grow and to market. (The nearest markets for most Navajo are 4-500

miles away), 2) Recognizing where the Navajo people are in a relationship with the off-reservation sector. The Navajo people for the most part are very heavily dependent on Federal, State, and Tribal governments, which gives them a post--industrial socio-economic base, but a pastoral ancestry. To try to go back to agriculture would be difficult. (When you mention agriculture to Navajo college student, they cringe because they want to be engineers or anything besides a farmer), 3) the Navajo Tribe's economy is trying to move from behind the time and this is going to a while. Because the Navajo economy was not in place, NIIP development did not impact the reservation as it did the off reservation sector, 4) governmental agencies of the Federal, and States must be watched. They will look out for what is best for them. They may even have to align themselves with others who are against irrigation, 5) the people of the Navajo Tribe must take a very active role in water right cases and learn to fight in courts and to negotiate when it is necessary, 6) In any project, there are political interests. Leaders among the Navajo, many times, serve their own self interests and, in this light, they must be considered suspect. Indian politics and tribal bureaucracy are just as bad or worst than Anglo bureaucracy. Sometimes the tribal government stinks to high heaven in terms of making decisions. Sometimes there really are too many chiefs and not enough Indians. (There was an opportunity to place a potato industry on NIIP land, but because the decision makers were slow, the plant has been moved to Bloomfield, New Mexico, where it adds to the off reservation economy), 7) The local self-interests of grass-root Navajo citizens must be dealt with. The range users are always trying to keep the status quo of the land tenure system to benefit only themselves. This has increased tensions between families and tribal government entities.¹³ Trust status has also made it very difficult to get a loan from a bank, 8) Ethnocentrism must be watched. Thinking our tribe is better than that other group or tribe leads to conflicts. (I know that when I was a kid in Indian schools, we used to laugh at the Pima and Papagos. Today, we are still trying to push each other around, and that must stop.) This attitude must be dissolved in order to encourage cooperation. One only needs to observe the Navajo-Hopi land dispute to see such a scenario. In order for tribes to survive, they need to cooperatively work together to develop their natural resources. 9) The Navajo need to formulate an education network to interest their students and adults in agriculture, and 10) Conferences like this where we can visit and share information help us all out. Further, research at land grant universities somehow should be made available to Navajo and other Tribes to study what can be done with natural resources. In 1967-1968, one university¹⁴ with the assistance of the US State Department took foreign students all over the United States to see the latest research being done. Surely, the same Federal agencies could also do this for its own citizens, particularly American Indians.

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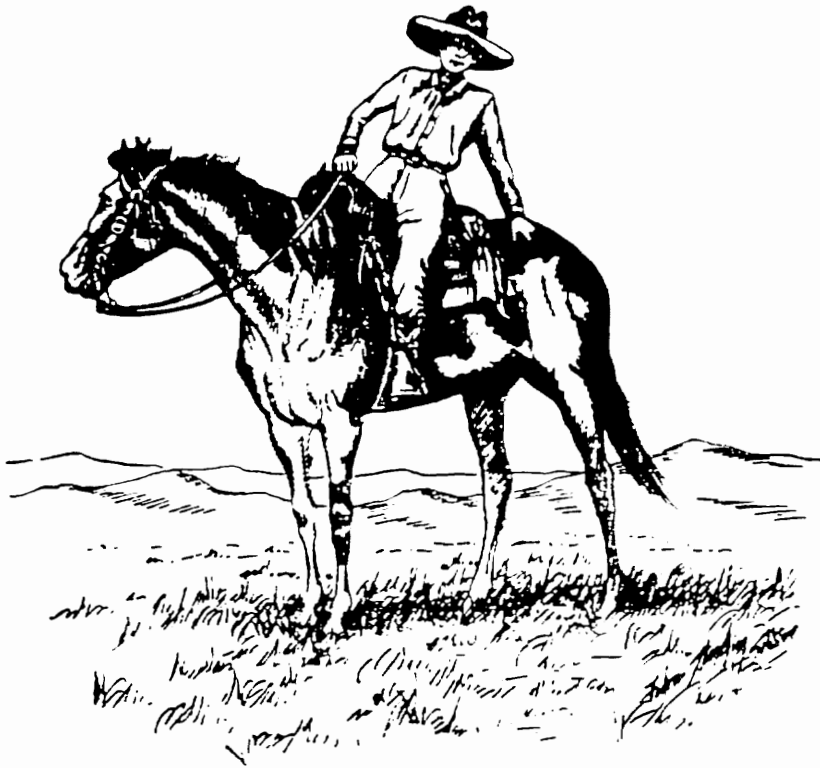


by ANN CLARK

LAKOTA PTEOLA HOKSILA

PRIMER

SIoux COWBOY



SIoux COWBOY

I live in the sioux country
I live on the prairie
I live in the prairie sioux country
I am a sioux cowboy

LAK'OTA PTE'OLE

lak'ota t'amak'oc'epi kin imahel wat'i
oblaye mak'oc'e akanl wat'i
lak'ota oblaye mak'oc'e kin imahel wat'i
lak'ota pte'ole kin hemac'a

INDIANS AND CATTLE RANCHING: IDENTITY, SYMBOL AND STYLE IN THE AMERICAN WEST

Peter Iverson
Department of History
Arizona State University

For a good many years a good many children growing up in the United States played at cowboys and Indians. Today Luke Skywalker has replaced the Lone Ranger and the primacy of those time honored symbols surely has faded from the American scene. Yet as those of who live in the less than wild Wests are reminded every summer, there is still a market for the romantic past. People from real outposts of civilization--Chicago, obviously, but Akron, Trenton, and Schenectady as well--still stream relentlessly past the Mississippi on a once in a lifetime westward trek. And many of them wouldn't mind seeing a few real cowboys or a few real Indians out there in Marlboro Country.

I don't know anyone who grew up playing farmers and Indians. It was always cowboys and Indians, or more precisely, cowboys versus Indians. The two were point, counterpoint, one against the other, with the twain definitely not meeting. The cowboys won, the Indians lost. The cowboy triumphed not only out there on the range, but throughout popular American culture where his victories were all the more convincing.

Lorne Green's recent death made me think about how much more confused the picture is today than a generation ago when he ruled the Ponderosa and Battlestar Galactica was nowhere to be seen. He and Dan Blocker now are gone, Pernell Roberts has graduated from medical school and Michael Landon is on a highway to heaven. The outlook on the Indian side of the ledger is no more encouraging; Iron Eyes Cody in the Rose Parade was the first Indian I had seen on television on a long time. And all over the rural West, I hear about ranchers being forced out, leaving the land. It sounds more than a little like relocation, and together with other things I have seen in the urban West in the past decade, it makes me question that cherished dichotomy between cowboy and Indian.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century, the United States forcefully exerted its will over the western reaches of the nation. Indians selected various strategies to fend off or cope with extraordinary pressures of the age. In the end they confronted defeat, change, and choices. They had known all before, but there had to have been a particular urgency about the contemporary scene of the late 1800s. What kind of lives could they now lead? Where would they lead them?

There were to be sure many contributors to the terrible dilemma in which Indian peoples found themselves at this time. Non-Indian cattle ranchers figured prominently among those who sought to eliminate or greatly reduce Indian land holdings. As many observers have noted, the degree to which vast stretches of the region were particularly suited to cattle grazing hastened the beginning of the end of the American frontier. Many people who had never been involved in the cattle business before, including untold numbers of European immigrants, and many who never should have been involved in the cattle business saw ranching as their one great chance for socioeconomic advancement.

Regardless of the cowboy's success, as Paul Horgan once wrote, of making "his nation see him in his own terms," cattle ranching as a business proved to be a particularly perilous enterprise.¹ We celebrate in our histories of the West

those ranchers who made it; we are less aware of all those who did not. The latter obviously have always outnumbered the former. Ranching has its satisfactions, but it is a tough way to carve out a living. It is not only demanding physically but wildly unpredictable in terms of weather, disease, costs, and the works of the regional and national economy. We are tempted to focus on the "cattle kings," those Donald Trumps of territorial times, but endlessly ambitious entrepreneurs have probably never been the norm.

How would Indians of a century ago and more respond to that economy, to that culture? It is useful to recall that Indian cattle ranching can be traced back further than is commonly realized. Yet widespread interest and involvement in cattle raising is largely a post-Civil War phenomenon, just as the heyday of the cattle ranching era may be placed in that generation from the mid-1860s to the mid-1880s. One inevitably thinks of the proverbial double-edged sword. On the one hand, Anglo ranchers pushed relentlessly on to Indian lands. Reservation boundaries were hardly a barrier. Indian land holdings were limited by ranching interests and then splintered again by those interests. And yet, Indian leaders in many areas had no choice but to consider alternatives for their future. On the plains, for example, if the buffalo days were essentially gone, then what would replace them?

It is hardly surprising that the option of cattle ranching would present itself. In those days, of course, a considerably larger proportion of Americans wrested in a living from the land.² The economic potential of much Indian land for the raising of beef cattle obviously was being demonstrated from the southwest to the northern plains. Indian agents frequently promoted ranching as a means to inculcate a variety of virtues, in keeping with the assimilationist thrust of late nineteenth century federal policy. Reformers and government employees alike preached the gospel of hard work, self-sufficiency, and a reduced investment of government money on the reservation.

Preaching was one thing, practice often another. Federal Indian policy has also been characterized by paradox and contradiction and this era is an excellent case in point. At the same time that agents advocated decreased dependency on federal largesse and greater gumption on the part of the Indians, they could work hand-in-glove with non-Indian interests to throw open major portions of the Indian estate and exercise dictatorial powers upon the subjects in their own terrain. Though such government employees could argue that non-Indian ranchers and farmers provided role models for shiftless, inexperienced Indians, widespread usurpation of Indian land hardly could encourage prompt internalization of the Protestant work ethic. Agents also tended not to stay in one locale for an extended period of time, thus reducing their effectiveness in implementing long-term change. And there were a good number of "lifers" in the Indian Service who migrated from one post to another, carrying battle scars and hardened attitudes with them about the nature of Indians and the duties they were carrying out.³

Why, then, would Indians from many parts of the American West turn to cattle ranching? The answer must be found in other than strictly economic terms. By the late nineteenth century, when a growing number of Indian communities were becoming more involved with the raising of beef cattle, some of the difficulties and limitation of the business had to have been apparent. The massive disasters of the mid-1880s, spurred not only by bad winters and absentee ownership but also by the very practices they would later be chastised for themselves, overstocking and overgrazing. Surely Indians perceived non-Indian ranchers who struggled to get by and others who sooner or later surrendered.

I do not mean to suggest that economic reasons were insignificant and I will turn to a consideration of them in a moment, but one must approach the question more broadly. We should be pondering the matter of identity, both the identity of the group and the identity of the individual. Defeats in war, treaties and agreements signed, confinements on reservations, and forced education of their children all challenged group and self-esteem. Ways had to be found to maintain or regenerate that esteem and the identity.

Identity may be defined as "the sum total of feelings on the part of group members about those values, symbols, and common histories that identify them as a distinct group."⁴ Many historians have tended to swallow whole the notion that the Americanization era of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries or the termination era following World War II must be perceived solely in negative terms. While not minimizing the deleterious effects of either period, one needs to move beyond the casual assumption that bad policies yield only bad results.⁵ Social scientists have noted for a great many years that individuals and groups may respond in a variety of ways to prejudice and discrimination; one of the potential responses can be a strengthening of loyalty or ties to the very group that is the object of that prejudice or discrimination. In a related sense, students of African tribal groups in the 1950s and 1960s particularly stressed the importance "of increasing interaction between them (ethnic groups), within the context of new political situations." Increased interaction promoted ethnic identity rather than discouraged it.⁶ Contact with new peoples and new situations therefore could heighten tribal identity, if not create opportunities for innovation and change as well as presenting the possibility of deterioration and despair.

One of the most impressive analyses of Indian identity over the past century may be found in Loretta Fowler's new book, Shared Symbols, Contested Meanings: Gros Ventre Culture and History, 1778-1984. As in her previous study of the Northern Arapahoes, Fowler in part employs some key ideas of Clifford Geertz in her study of change "We must look, then," she writes, "at the interaction, the reciprocal interplay, between cultural and social forces if we are to come to terms with change over time." Drawing from Geertz's work on Indonesia, she adds:

Meanings are altered in the light of new concerns and new aspirations drawn from new events, relationships, and circumstances. Thus symbols are invented, discarded, and reinterpreted as they are adapted to new social realities. A community's view of itself and its past is reconstructed and new symbols of identity emerge in the light of new social, ecological, and psychological conditions.⁷

Two more terms need to be defined for the purposes of the discussion of Indian cattle ranching that follows. They are symbol and style. Royce quotes a dictionary definition of symbol: "something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental resemblance; esp: a visible sign of something invisible," and additionally "an act, sound, or object having cultural significance and the capacity to excite or objectify a response." Finally she notes Cohen's definition of symbols as "objects, acts, concepts, or linguistic formations that stand ambiguously for a multiplicity of disparate meanings, evoke sentiments and emotions, and impel men (women, too, one should add) to action" Symbols influence the evolution of style. Style is contrasted to tradition, which suggests a conservative,

unchanging approach to symbols and values. Style suggests a changing, flexible approach which involves choice. The style of an ethnic group thus support "the essence of ethnicity": "room to maneuver, flexibility of strategies, and tactics of choice."⁸

Indian cattle ranching may be considered as part of a strategy to confront changing times. It became part of the style of many late nineteenth and twentieth century western American Indian communities. While the outcome of ranching can be analyzed in economic terms, the importance of this pastime must be seen as well in a social and cultural context. Just as we would be ill-advised to dissect the value placed upon cattle ranching among non-Indians on the basis of dollars and cents, we should apply that same perception to the development of Indian cattle ranching. Cattle ranching could thus contribute to tribal identity and individual self-esteem. Cattle ranching emerges therefore as a symbol for the new day that the reservation period undeniably represented.

Indian cattle ranching in the West during the Americanization era often proved problematic.⁹ As Commissioners of Indian Affairs and reservation agents arrived and departed frequently, national and local policies fluctuated. Ranching could be supported, then farming could be advocated in its place. The development of individual and tribal herds could be backed, then leasing or cession of Indian lands could transpire. As an answer to the need for Indian economic development, cattle ranching could hardly be labeled a panacea. Nonetheless, it represents one of the most widespread and significant examples of efforts within Indian country to reduce dependence and to allow for the transition of reservation life "from prison to homeland."¹⁰

Loretta Fowler's discussion of the place of cattle ranching on the Fort Belknap reservation serves as a useful illustration. She notes among the Gros Ventres a "behavioral ideal, the pursuit of rank through generosity to others," as "especially consistent through time;" the acquisition of cattle during the early reservation period thus could yield "another opportunity to accumulate property that they could donate during moiety dances or hand games to earn rank."¹¹ Earlier horses were a prime commodity for sale and for gift, but the end of buffalo-hunting days and raiding for horses and confinement on the reservation combined with the agents' ability to issue cattle to persons of his choosing caused cattle to also become highly valued. Cattle also gave younger men a new opportunity for prominence.¹²

Despite the eagerness of the Gros Ventres to be viewed as progressive and to be able to be competitive in the regional economy of late nineteenth and early twentieth century America, several forces combined to force a decline in their fortunes in the industry. Fowler specifically mentions the frequent turnover in agents encouraging erratic policy, trespass of non-Indian livestock, "cattle rustling, diversion of their water, and the leasing of land to outsiders at very low rates, as well as outright graft on the part of their agents."¹³

One thinks of Fort Belknap in regard to the famous Winters v. U.S. decision of the United States Supreme Court in 1908, which gave birth to the so-called Winters Doctrine. The agent at Fort Belknap, William Logan, usually is viewed as the conscientious government employee who attempted to keep Henry Winter, Mose Anderson and other off-reservation non-Indian farmers and ranchers from diverting too much water from the Milk River before it reached the reservation. A former graduate student at the University of Wyoming, Michael Massie, discovered in his research that Logan was as concerned about the water getting to the non-Indian farmers and ranchers on the reservation, people whom he perceived as role models for his charges. According to the members of the

tribe, Gros Ventre cattle herds also diminished in number during Logan's eight year tenure as agent, because he appropriated the livestock for his own herd.¹⁴

The decline of the Gros Ventre cattle industry in turn led to Logan's successor leasing out nearly the entire reservation to the Matador Cattle Company of Texas from 1913 to 1927. The practice of leasing Indian grazing land to outside interests prevailed on many reservations during the latter years of the Americanization era. Indians could and did protest such arrangements, but usually their complaints had little effect. William T. Hagan, Donald J. Berthrong, Richmond L. Clow and other historians have all documented instances of this new practice.¹⁵ Clow's recent article in North Dakota History reviews the celebrated conflict on the Standing Rock reservation of North and South Dakota at the turn of the century. In this case, the agent, a man blessed with the name of George H. Bingenheimer, was ordered by the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs to grant a lease on the reservation to outside interests. Bingenheimer eventually garnered the necessary three-quarters of the adult male signatures to lease a nearly thirty mile square piece of land in the northwest portion of the reservation. The government promptly advertised almost twice as much land as available for lease. Tribal representatives alerted the Indian Rights Association of said arrangements and the controversy could be said to be officially underway. Though criticism by the IRA and members of the Board of Indian Commissioners reduced the amount of acreage ultimately leased, well-known South Dakota rancher Ed Lemmon still wound up with a bit over three-quarters of a million acres of grazing land. As Clow concludes, while leasing emerged as a main source of tribal income, it naturally also meant loss of control and thus, in his words, "it forced them to continue their dependency upon the United States government's Office of Indian Affairs. As outsiders stocked reservation pastures, Indian cattle herds, small from the start, continued to grow smaller."¹⁶

Nonetheless, by the first portion of this century, Indian ranchers had demonstrated their capacity for this new economic activity and the ability of their lands to sustain impressive yields. By 1910 agents at some of the larger Plains reservations observed not only significant gains in the number of cattle but simply large numbers of cattle: 12,000 at the Blackfeet agency, over 12,000 at Standing Rock, over 15,000 at Cheyenne River and 42,316 at Pine Ridge.¹⁷ These were pinnacles, however, with the usual causes--especially non-Indian demographic pressure, leasing, and allotment--contributing to decline over the next decade.¹⁸

Leasing not only limited Indian options and potential for economic development but as well encouraged trespass and overgrazing on a grand scale. If agents often envisaged white permittees as, "models of industry and civilization," then as Thomas R. McGuire has commented in his study of the livestock economy on the White Mountain Apache reservation, it is "unlikely" that they "served well" in this role.¹⁹ Even in the early twentieth century, corporate interests began to supercede local concerns in elbowing their way on to White Mountain Apache land. Some of the largest corporations in the region showed up: White River Land and Cattle Company, Babbitt Brothers, Hopen Land and Cattle Company, Slaughter Brothers, Flying V Cattle Company, Northern Arizona Land and Cattle Company, Concho Livestock Company, Ryan Livestock Company.²⁰ These well-financed operations for a time closed off the options not only of local, largely Mormon, operators but also a relatively small number of "mixed-blood" ranchers. The mixed-blood dimension of the story is one worthy of more intensive investigation, for certainly at White Mountain and elsewhere

cattle ranching offered a new means for socioeconomic advancement for first and second generation mixed-blood families.

By the early to mid-1920's on the adjoining White Mountain and San Carlos Apache reservations in east central Arizona, Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel were pursuing a new strategy that may appear a decade before one would anticipate its enactment. The reservations were carved into districts, with Apache cattlemen, in turn, prompted to join the grazing association associated with a particular district. While, as one would expect, Apache stockowners did not move precipitously into such imposed entities, the fact that most owners held not very many head of cattle could mean that more collective approaches were not impossible. Moreover, the development of the tribal herd, infused with the addition of quality heifers and bulls, demonstrated in the market place through prices received that quality could pay off.²¹ If the growth of a tribal approach to the raising of livestock gradually could be used to force out white permittees, as superintendent James Kitch clearly exemplified at San Carlos, then it also could limit the claims and ambitions of mixed-blood ranchers. Top BIA personnel and newly established tribal councils could combine for what McGuire has called "reconquest" of the reservation range. By contrast, Russel Barsh has argued recently that "allotment may have given Indian leaders the opportunity to reestablish their economic and political independence from the Bureau of Indian Affairs--and the New Deal reorganization program crushed this emergent Indian bourgeoisie and its growing power."²²

Nearly half a century after its conclusion, the commissionership of John Collier continues to provoke criticism and compliments. Two dimensions of these years merit brief discussion here. The attempts at livestock reduction on reservations such as the Navajo and the Papago produced emotional resistance. While within Navajo country the program was aimed primarily at reducing the number of sheep, horses, and goats, the reaction to livestock reduction in general informs us that the issue was more than economic. Navajos to this day remember this era bitterly because it threatened who they were as a people. Livestock had become central to the Navajo identity, to the workings of Navajo culture. Killing the animals would be compared in tribal oral historical accounts to destroying the people.²³ Among the Papago cattle took the place of sheep. Because the Papagos had herded cattle since the days of Spanish missionaries, there had been ample time to "become accustomed to the use of cattle and horses, adjust themselves to the new occupational elements, and assimilate the industry into the family, social, and economic structure of the tribe at their own tempo, without interference."²⁴ Papago resistance to livestock reduction again must be understood similarly as a response against a direct threat to a way of life.²⁵

Even if they often went about it in the wrong way, Collier and his colleagues ultimately believed in the importance of land to Indian life. Their heavy-handed efforts at livestock reduction, improving the quality of livestock, introducing or augmenting tribal herds, and combatting soil erosion, combined with the halting of allotment and the consolidation of tribal lands yielded mixed results, but those results were far from entirely negative. It almost goes without saying that non-Indian regional, state, and local interests generally continued to seek access to Indian land and did not support a reversal of a well-established trend of inexpensive leases and reduction of Indian land holdings. Outsiders' protests against the gradual development of tribal livestock association and herds and the anger over the termination of leases speak eloquently to the often-unobserved effectiveness of new policies.²⁶ Had local Bureau personnel and Congress more

fully supported what Collier originally envisaged, the protests would have been still more shrill.

And even if the Indian New Deal did not fulfill the expectations it had aroused in some people, it did provide a break between the Americanization era and the termination period. If conditions during the Depression and war years were not always good, then as Fowler puts it, "the termination era produced outright despair, for in the Gros Ventre view it actually reversed most of the gains they had made." Heirship difficulties mounted, but the federal government halted the loans to the Gros Ventres and Assiniboines to buy land from heirs. Tribal enterprises such as the bull pool, hay farm, and cattle herd were closed.²⁷ At a time when the Bureau of Indian Affairs sought to push Indians off of reservations, help to beleaguered ranchers seemed counterproductive.

The 1960s brought cessation to the overt terminationist philosophy. The modern period, however, also witnessed a changing American West. Even if the government did not promote a move to the city, economic conditions prevailing still could encourage such uprooting. In the non-Indian West, the number of cattle ranchers dwindled. Mechanization and overall operating costs made smaller enterprises increasingly more unfeasible. Investment costs kept new people from entering a precarious business. The movement toward greater Indian self-determination did not make life easier for non-Indian lessees, who faced higher rents or eviction. Yet more control of lands tied to a progressively more troubled economic pursuit naturally did not create instant financial miracles for the tribes.

Many reservations in the West today include within their borders non-Indian families who have owned often for generations the land they use. In some instances, those non-Indian farmers and ranchers actually control or own a majority of reservation land. In those locations, the ironies of today's marketplace and society must be especially poignant. For Indian and non-Indian cowboys, the cattle business is a difficult one, indeed. For the rural American West, one could hardly recommend it as a cure for rural economic underdevelopment. As a strategy to reduce dependence, it certainly has its limitations; as a means to reinforce identity it still has its advantages.

Today we are seeing removal and relocation in many portions of our region. It may be called different things but it is being experienced by Indians and non-Indians alike.²⁸ If all the cowboys now look increasingly like Indians of old, then it would be well for us to remember that the loss that is taking place must be measured in more than economic terms, just as we always should have realized that ranching itself is more than an economic undertaking. I am reminded of William Y. Adams' discussion of Navajo ecology and economy in which he emphasizes the significance of social considerations. The control values of Navajo life are social rather than economic. Thus Navajos "most value those forms of economic activity which most preserve and reinforce the traditional fabric of their society and least value those activities which threaten or disrupt it."²⁹

Ranchers are thus resisting assimilation into urban America. That resistance may be traced to their identity, their symbols, their style. As we should have learned by now, it is wise not to underestimate the tenacity that may be derived from all three.

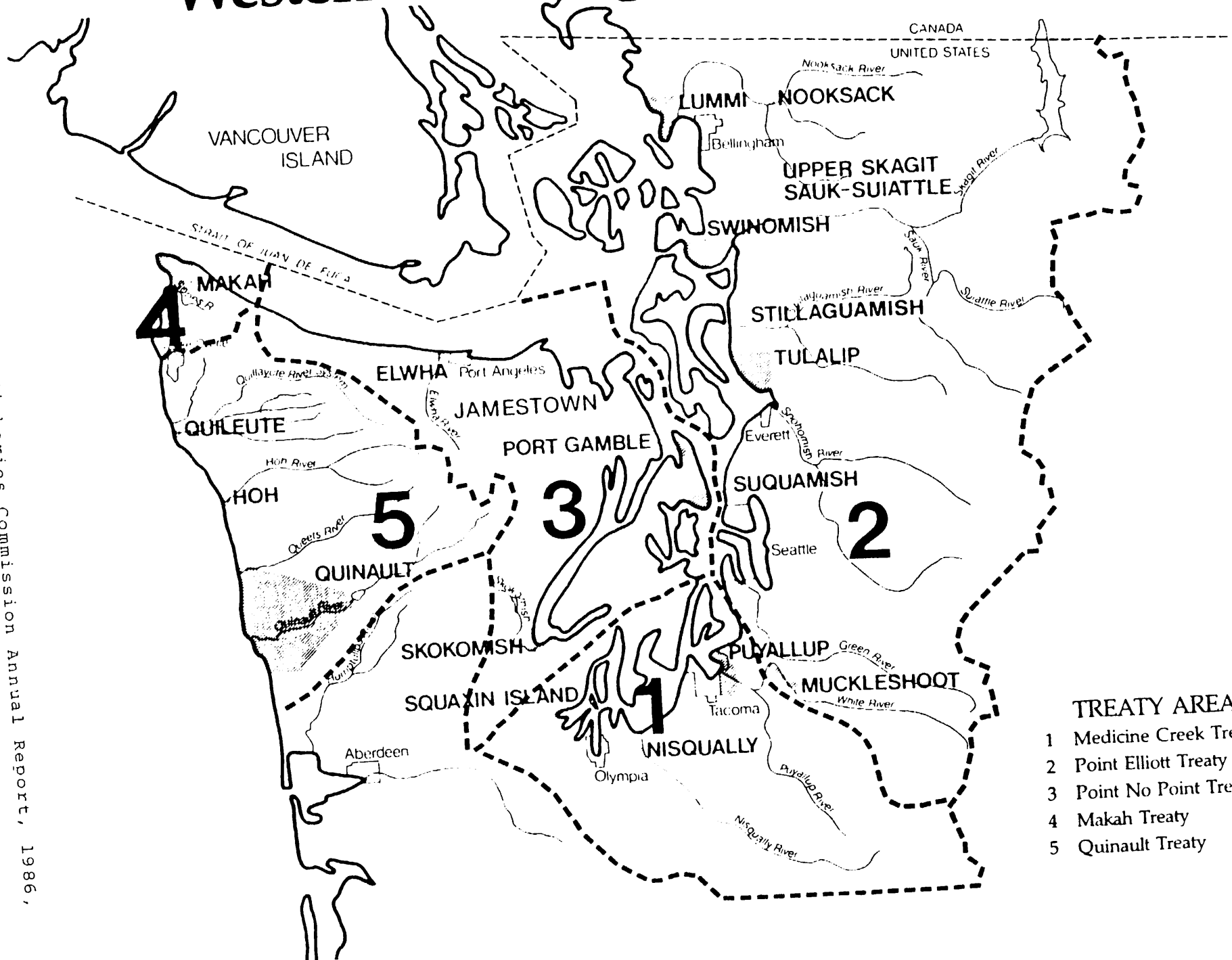
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Western Washington Treaty Areas

Source: Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Annual Report, 1986, Olympia, Washington.



TREATY AREAS

- 1 Medicine Creek Treaty
- 2 Point Elliott Treaty
- 3 Point No Point Treaty
- 4 Makah Treaty
- 5 Quinault Treaty

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THE CASE OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST INDIAN FISHING TRIBES: BENEFITS AND COSTS OF OVERCOMING DEPENDENCY

Alvin J. Ziontz
Attorney
Seattle, Washington

I. Introduction

This paper will sketch the economic cycle of the Pacific Northwest Indian tribes' fishing economy from pre-contact prosperity, through a 75 year period of oppression and poverty to a revitalization of their fishing industry. The paper's thesis is that while the judicial validation of the tribes' treaty rights in contemporary times has revitalized their fishing economy, it has also brought with it a new problem: inter-tribal strife.

II. A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF NORTHWEST INDIAN FISHERIES

A. The Pre-Treaty Indian Fishing Economy.

For several thousand years before contact with white cultures, the native inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest enjoyed a relatively affluent economy because of the abundant availability of sea life, particularly salmon, halibut, seal and whale. The pacific salmon eventually became the foundation of a major fishing industry in the Northwest, and in the process, the subject of a bitter struggle between the Northwest Indian tribes and white society.

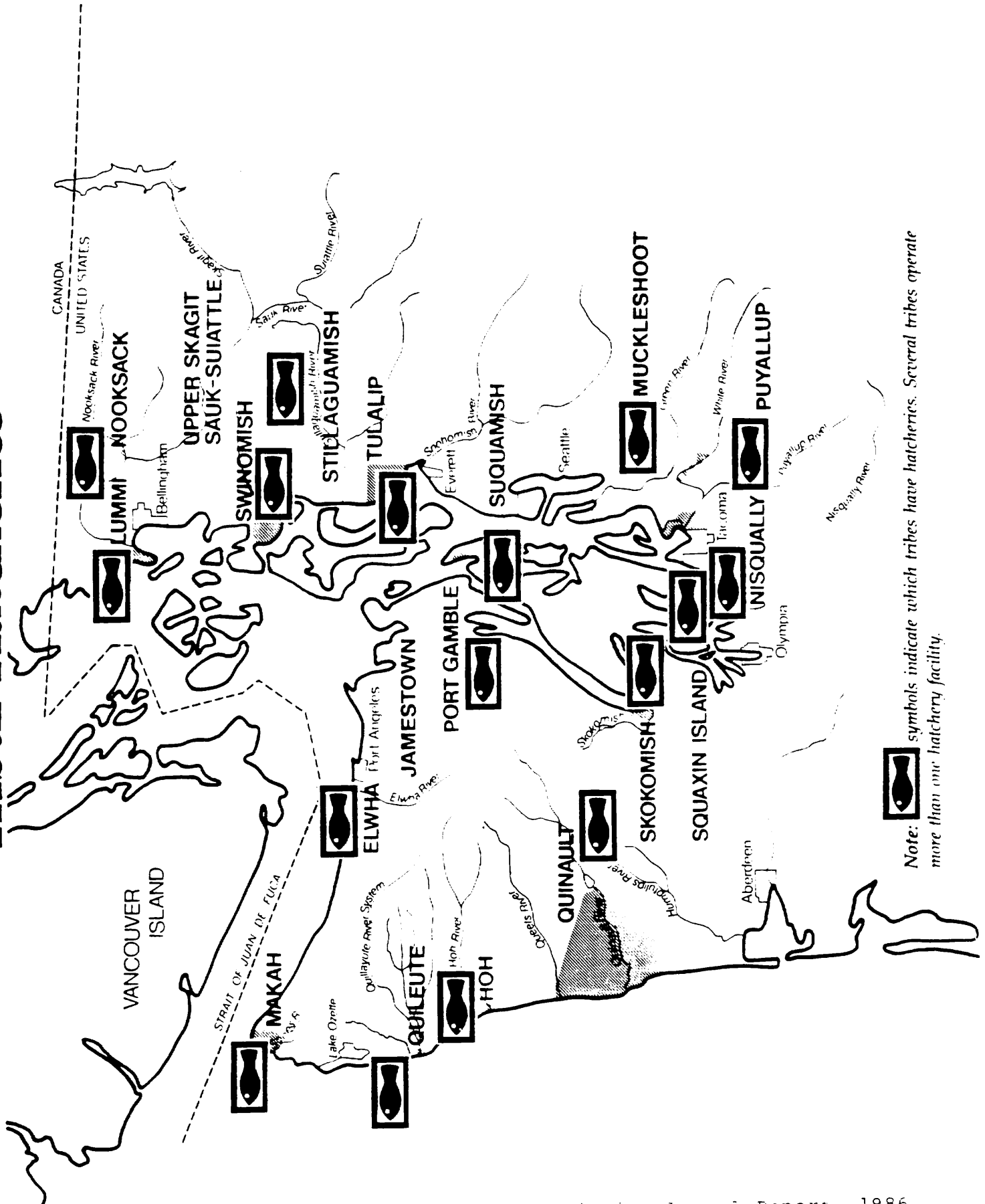
The salmon are anadromous fish; hatching in fresh water streams, rivers and lakes and migrating to the ocean where they attain their full growth after a sojourn lasting from 18 months to 5 years. Ultimately, the salmon return to their natal streams where they spawn and die. All of the salmon species were fished by aboriginal Northwest peoples in the rivers, streams and lakes and in the bays and marine waters of the Northwest. Most salmon, however, were taken by weirs, traps and nets in the rivers, although netting, spearing and gaffing techniques were also used to take salmon in such deep rivers as the Columbia.¹

The salmon was of central importance to the Northwest Coast Indian people. More than a food source, it was an essential part of the culture beliefs and religion. The abundance of the salmon and the other forms of sea life made it possible for the Northwest Coast Indian people to develop a rich culture based upon the relatively easy availability of food sources.² Salmon were present in such abundance that it not only provided ample food supplies for subsistence, but also formed a staple for Indian commerce with other tribes and white shippers.³

B. The Stevens Treaties

In 1854, the territorial Governor, Isaac Stevens, conducted a whirlwind series of treaty meetings with the Indians of Puget Sound and the Pacific coast to obtain cession of their lands in western Washington. Beginning with the Treaty of Medicine Creek December 26, 1854, there followed in quick succession the Treaty of Point Elliott on January 22, 1855, the Treaty of Point No Point on

Tribal Hatcheries



Note: symbols indicate which tribes have hatcheries. Several tribes operate more than one hatchery facility.

January 26, 1855, the Treaty of Neah Bay with the Makahs on January 31, 1855, and the Treaty of Olympia made with Bands of the Quinault and Quileute on July 1, 1855. See map, Appendix 1.

Each of the treaties contained a guarantee in the following form (with some minor variations):

"The right of taking fish at usual and accustomed grounds and stations is further secured to said Indians in common with all citizens of the territory."

The dominant motivation of the United States government was to extinguish Indian claims of land ownership. The tribes reserved only small amounts of land and their right to continue to fish at their "usual and accustomed" places. At the time of the treaties, the federal government did not foresee conflict between its guarantee of a continuing fishing right and future population growth of the territory. It seemed inconceivable at the time that such an enormous resource could be over-exploited.

C. Industrialization of the Northwest Fisheries and Its Effect on the Indians.

With the perfection of the vacuum canning process and its application to the Pacific salmon in 1864, industrialization of the fishing industry began. By 1880, increased mechanization and rail access to national markets had brought about a proliferation of salmon canneries and, with it, an intensification of river fisheries. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Indians of the Northwest had largely adapted their lives to a money economy, selling fish and other commodities for money with which they purchased food and manufactured goods.

However, the Indians soon found that non-Indian fishermen were appearing in greater and greater numbers and were intercepting large numbers of fish before they reached the rivers. By 1907, the State of Washington had determined that the salmon fisheries should be moved off the rivers entirely in order to accommodate increasing numbers of white fishermen. Thereafter, except for the Columbia River, salmon fishing in the rivers was outlawed. Thus, fishing at "usual and accustomed grounds" guaranteed by federal treaty, was prohibited by State law. What had begun as an agreement by the Indians that whites could fish with them at their traditional grounds became an exclusion of the Indians from those grounds. From a life of relative plenty and ease, the Indians swiftly moved toward poverty.

D. The Indian Fishing Rights Struggle Intensifies.

For the next 75 years Indian treaty rights were ignored by the State and the federal government made only a few feeble attempts to defend these rights in the courts. In the 1940's, the Yakima Tribe and the Makah Tribe separately challenged State power in the courts with some modest success. But the Indian fishing rights struggle did not begin in earnest until 1954, when a Puyallup Indian, Bob Satiacum, openly challenged State law by gillnetting in daylight hours in plain view of the residents of Tacoma, Washington. The arrest of Satiacum commenced a legal struggle which was to continue for the next 20

years. The Satiacum case generated a series of U.S. Supreme Court decisions, all affirming that the State's authority to restrict Indian fishing was limited to conservation regulation. But the State insisted on applying the term "conservation" so broadly that any river fishing with a net was claimed to be harmful to the perpetuation of the salmon runs. In fact, the State had allocated the entire harvestable number of fish in the salmon runs to non-Indian fisheries conducted in marine waters. By State design, only the number required to spawn remained. The Indians were left with an untouchable resource.

By the 1960's, the Indians of the Northwest were aroused and, partly inspired by the civil rights revolution then in full sway, they began a series of confrontations with State authority -- the "fish-ins". Ultimately, the Justice Department decided it could no longer withstand the embarrassment of Indians being beaten and arrested for exercising their federally guaranteed rights.

E. The Culmination of the Legal Battle: U.S. v. Washington.

The decisive period of litigation began in 1969, when the federal government brought suit challenging Oregon's prohibition of Indian fishing in their usual and accustomed grounds on the Columbia River while permitting commercial harvest to take place in stretches of the river below those grounds. The decision in that case, United States v. Oregon,⁴ upheld the position of the United States that the State had an obligation to treat treaty Indians as a completely separate user group and to restrict non-Indians so that Indians could get a fair share of the harvest.

The following year, the federal government brought suit against the State of Washington seeking a similar ruling which would apply to the fisheries of Puget Sound and the coastal waters of Washington State. The suit was United States v. Washington. It was filed on behalf of the Puyallup, Nisqually, Muckleshoot, Skokomish, Makah, Quileute and Hoh tribes. Shortly thereafter, other tribes intervened: Lummi, Quinault, Sauk-Suiattle, Squaxin Island, Stillaguamish, Upper-Skagit and Yakima. Four years went into the preparation of extensive biological, anthropological and fisheries management facts. The case was heard by the Senior District Judge in western Washington, George Boldt, who undertook to decide once and for all what the meaning of the treaty language was, and how the sharing of the resource between treaty fishermen and non-treaty fishermen would be calculated, as well as a host of subsidiary issues.

When the decision was handed down in 1974,⁵ it was a sweeping affirmation of the contentions of the tribes and the United States; the State of Washington had systematically violated the treaty rights of the Northwest Indians and the treaties obligated the states to limit their citizens to no more than one-half of the harvestable number of all runs of salmon passing through the usual and accustomed grounds of the treaty tribes. The court made detailed findings of fact locating the usual and accustomed grounds of each tribe which was a party to the suit. The court also established a procedure for resolution of fisheries management issues, both pre-season and in-season. The decision evoked a storm of protest from non-Indian interest groups -- the sports and commercial fisheries organizations. However, despite vigorous efforts by the State and these interest groups, the decision was upheld on appeal and ultimately by the United States Supreme Court. Washington v. Commercial Fishing Vessel Ass'n.⁶

III. POST U.S. v WASHINGTON: REVITALIZATION OF THE INDIAN FISHING ECONOMY

More than ten years have elapsed since the Indians' court victory in U.S. v. Washington and it is possible to assess some of the effects of that decision on the Indian fishing economy of the Northwest.

A. Growth of the Indian Fishery.

The decision of the District Court in 1974 proved to be a tremendous impetus for the revival of the Indian fishing economy. It not only affirmed the right of Indians to have their harvest opportunity respected by the State, but left the Indians unrestricted as to the type of gear which could be used at any of their usual and accustomed grounds. Almost all of the tribes who participated in the case were found to have usual and accustomed grounds, not only in rivers and streams, but also in the mouths, bays and waters of Puget Sound, and, in the case of some of the tribes, rights to fish in the marine waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the coastal waters in the ocean off the coast Washington to a distance of 40 miles off-shore. See map, Appendix 1.

At one stroke, membership in a Pacific Northwest fishing tribe became attractive to many. Almost all tribes restricted treaty fishing rights to enrolled members who resided on the reservation. The result, over time, was that many urban Indians returned to the reservations. Many small and moribund tribes found their membership rolls expanding. Perhaps most important, many new fishermen entered the fishery and many existing fishermen upgraded their gear; in many cases, moving from the river banks to marine waters in small gillnet boats and in some cases large, well-equipped gillnet and purse seine boats.

In 1977, there were approximately 1,400 treaty Indian fishermen in the U.S. v. Washington case area. (See map, Appendix 1.) They were fishing in competition with approximately 5,700 non-treaty commercial fishermen and 300,000 to 400,000 sports fishermen.⁷

The treaty fishermen increased their gear over the period 1977-79 as shown in the following table:

/ See Table 1 /

By 1984, the number of treaty Indians had increased almost threefold to 3,794.⁸

B. Growth of the Indian Fishing Economy.

As one would expect, the growth in fleet size was accompanied by an increasing Indian share of the harvest. This was, of course, the mandate of U.S. v. Washington and the following figures showing salmon catches in the U.S. v. Washington area trace the expansion of the Indian fishery from 1970 through 1985:

TABLE 1

TREATY AND NON-TREATY FLEET SIZES IN THE US v WASHINGTON CASE AREA, 1977-79

1977	39	245	10	313	508	6	-	-	1,121
1978	56	296	10	390	620	8	-	-	1,380
1979	75	351	14	422	968	30	2	287	2,149
	Treaty\ Troll\ Power\ Purse\ Hand-\River\Beach\ Reef\ Other*\Totals								
	Reel, \Seiners\ pull\Fishers\Seine\Net								
	Marine \Gillnet\								
	Gillnet \Marine Skiffs								

* "Other" includes set and drift nets, spear, gaff, dipnet, trap, polenet, stakenet, and other traditional gear, including smelt and other non-salmon gear.

Source: "Treaty Fishing Rights And The Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission," May 1980, p. 13. (Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Olympia, Washington).

TABLE 3

Salmon And Steelhead Releases From Treaty Indian Hatcheries

<u>Year</u>	<u>Pink</u>	<u>Coho</u>	<u>Chinook</u>	<u>Chum</u>	<u>Sockeye</u>	<u>Steelhead</u>	<u>Total Fish</u>
1976	409,000	4,244,200	1,992,500	1,705,000	1,236,600	341,400	9,828,700
1977	0	5,319,000	1,848,000	11,504,000	186,000	288,000	19,145,000
1978	220,000	4,072,000	6,151,000	17,103,000	368,000	197,000	28,111,000
1979	0	4,067,000	4,998,000	18,478,000	483,000	470,000	28,496,000
1980	287,000	5,068,000	6,083,000	11,899,000	328,000	389,000	24,054,000
1981	0	6,959,000	5,577,000	12,368,000	297,000	1,162,000	26,642,000
1982	143,000	8,167,000	10,843,000	13,368,000	469,000	1,399,000	34,389,000
1983	0	9,581,000	9,987,000	12,878,000	476,000	1,127,000	34,049,000
1984	757,000	10,111,000	8,830,000	11,153,000	0	1,788,000	32,638,000
1985	0	17,605,460	10,049,223	27,787,534	200,269	2,435,120	58,077,606

Source: Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Annual Report, 1986, p.13
(Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Olympia, Washington).

TABLE 2
TREATY AND NON-TREATY CATCH IN US vs. WASHINGTON CASE AREA
1970-1985

Year	Treaty Catch	Percentage	Non-Treaty Catch	Percentage
1970-73 (average)	328,888	5.0%	6,231,044	95.0%
1974	688,582	11.9%	5,845,482	88.1%
1975	827,356	12.1%	5,987,374	87.9%
1976	986,153	13.8%	5,600,131	86.2%
1977	1,360,399	16.9%	6,691,223	83.1%
1978	1,391,890	27.2%	3,727,355	72.8%
1979	1,938,388	22.4%	6,742,089	77.7%
1980	1,526,571	42.9%	2,030,845	57.1%
1981	2,784,258	33.8%	5,450,628	66.2%
1982	3,019,250	45.7%	3,590,968	54.3%
1983	2,145,373	43.3%	2,809,077	53.7%
1984	2,033,362	49.0%	2,112,526	51.0%
1985*	5,273,838	49.6%	5,369,147	50.4%

*Preliminary commercial catch data.

Source: Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Annual Report, 1982, p. 30.
Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Olympia, Washington.

It is difficult to obtain data concerning the precise economic value to the Indians of this catch. However, as a rough calculation, one may assume that the Indian fishermen received in 1985, on average, approximately \$10 for each fish caught. This would amount to Indian fishing income in 1985 of approximately \$52,738,380. Even if one assumes that the total number of enrolled tribal fishermen had increased from 3,794 in 1984 to 4,000 by 1985, the average annual income per fishermen would have been \$13,184.

In fact, the 3,800-4,000 Indian fishermen include Indians fishing with limited hand gear all the way up to Indians fishing with 55 to 60 foot purse seine boats. Income would therefore vary from a few thousand dollars per year to upwards of \$100,000 per year for a few Indian fishermen. Lesser amounts are received by Indians who serve as crew members on Indian owned boats.⁹ Regardless of how the individual income is distributed, the fact is that overall income goes directly into the Indian communities of the Pacific Northwest. While the income is, for the most part, spent outside of the Indian community, it is reflected in highly visible improvements in the Pacific Northwest Indians' quality of life. Visits to reservations in the northwest coastal fishing areas show much new housing, new cars, pickup trucks, T.V. dish antennas, VCRs, children riding motorscooters, all-terrain vehicles and the like.

While it has not been possible to obtain specific data, one can only conclude, on an impressionistic basis, that the Indian fishing economy of the Northwest has been revived and has brought a middle class standard of living to many Northwest Indian families. Still, it has been pointed out that there are not

enough fish for all members of the tribe to make a livelihood at fishing and other forms of economic development are relied on to provide jobs.¹⁰

Nevertheless, the economic impacts of nearly \$53,000,000 flowing through Indian communities have been far reaching. For example, fisheries related businesses and activities have sprung up on many reservations. A number of the reservations now have Indian owned or tribally owned fish buying companies which buy fish from the Indian fishermen, process it and market it. Some tribes have purchased marinas for servicing fishing vessels. Other tribes have developed fish processing companies which take fish and freeze, filet or can the fish for shipment. Other tribes have experimented with aquaculture, i.e., raising fish in pens and releasing them to the ocean or raising them to market size in pens and marketing them directly.

All of this has brought to Indian communities an increasing level of sophistication and skills connected with the fishing industry. There has been created a growing cadre of Indians who are skilled in many aspects of the fishing industry, ranging from knowledge of marine engines and marine navigation equipment to operation of fisheries businesses using market analysis and management skills.

Many tribes have also undertaken fisheries enhancement programs. Attached hereto as Appendix 2, is a map showing the location of tribal hatcheries on reservations of the Northwest. The growth in tribal hatchery production is graphically shown by the following data:

/ See Table 3 /

This very substantial contribution to the fish population does not, of course, enure solely to the benefit of the Indians. Indeed, most of the hatchery production is caught by non-Indians in the commercial and sports fisheries in waters from Alaska down to Puget Sound. But it does make the tribes major "players" in the fisheries management game. This was one of the objectives of the federal District Court in U.S. v. Washington, i.e., to raise the tribal governments to the level of members of the family of governments having regulatory authority and production responsibility for fish.

C. Effects on Tribal Governments.

One of the major consequences of the U.S. v. Washington decision and its progeny has been the dramatic increase in intergovernmental relations between Indian tribes of Washington and Oregon and the State governments of the two States. The fisheries departments of these States and the tribes have found themselves increasingly sharing common goals and working cooperatively. For example, the establishment of a timber/fish/wildlife coalition in Washington State made up of industry and tribal representatives has provided a forum for studying impacts of logging practices on fish habitat as well as providing for water quality improvements and archeological and cultural resource protection.

Tribes have had substantial input into a Puget Sound water quality plan and many tribes work cooperatively with State agencies in specific watershed planning projects which have the potential to impact fish habitat. Tribes have joined with State and federal agencies in litigating issuance of permits by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for hydroelectric development on rivers. All of this has thrown the tribal governments and State governments together in a way never known to either prior to 1974.

Perhaps one of the more important consequences of U.S. v. Washington has been the strengthening of the tribal governments of the Northwest fishing tribes.

The decision itself mandated that the tribes establish processes and procedures for managing the fisheries and their fishermen. In the intervening 13 years, almost all tribes have now established fisheries departments staffed by competent, qualified biologists. Their main responsibility is to manage tribal fisheries in a biologically sound manner. They develop regulations which set opening and closing dates for fisheries, catch limits, size limits and closed areas. The tribal governments provide the law enforcement mechanisms, i.e., tribal fisheries patrols and tribal courts to prosecute violations of tribal fishing regulations. A number of tribes also impose a tribal tax on their fishermen to help fund the operations of these tribal governmental departments.

In summary, the Northwest Indian fishing rights court victories have had a profound effect on the Northwest Indian fishing economy. Indeed, the Northwest Indian fishing economy is one of the bright spots in the entire national picture of Indian economic development. It is, by and large, a success story. It has brought a sense of purpose and pride to Indian communities which suffered because of the lack of these elements in the community during the preceding 100 years. It has given many Indians incentives to get into the industry and to acquire better boats and gear. Perhaps the single most important reason why the Indian fishery economy has grown so rapidly is that this economy is a traditional one for Indians of the Pacific Northwest. It called upon them to adhere to established values and to exercise skills that were admired in the community. Perhaps most basic has been the Pacific Northwest Indians' profound orientation to the fish life of the waters of the Pacific Northwest which made fishing natural, not only to old timers, but to young newcomers.

IV. THE PROBLEMS ACCOMPANYING THE GROWTH OF THE INDIAN FISHING ECONOMY

The growth of the Pacific Northwest Indian fishing economy has not been trouble-free. Indeed, serious problems have emerged.

A. Source of the Problems: Common Resource.

The salmon resource is limited. More fishermen and more efficient gear fishing on a limited stock means lower catches per unit of effort. Despite increasing efforts of federal, state and tribal governments to augment natural salmon populations by production of hatchery stocks and other augmentation measures, it remains clear that the most important method of maintaining large returning fish populations is harvest control. This inevitably means increasing restraints on all fisheries user groups, tribal, sport and commercial.

The Boldt decision fixed each tribe's share at 50% of each run passing through that tribe's usual and accustomed grounds. The decision left it to the tribes to decide how to apportion the runs among themselves so as to ensure that no tribe would be deprived of its fair share of the fishery. To this date, no satisfactory principles for such inter-tribal allocation have been established. Increasing enrollments in Northwest coast tribes and enlargement of the tribal

fishing industry affects the livelihood of all Indian fishermen. Since all of the Northwest fishing tribes are fishing on what is essentially a common stock migrating, for the most part, through the waters of each of the tribes, the action of each tribe has the capacity to affect the interests of the others.

B. Issues Related to Persons Entitled to Share.

A number of issues related to growth in the size of the Indian fishery are becoming more serious with time. For instance, tribal blood quantum requirements and adoption procedures are no longer matters solely of internal concern. With tribal membership now carrying the potential for sharing in the right to a good livelihood, tribes will find themselves facing increased pressures from their members to admit family members who are products of intermarriage and would not meet existing blood quantum requirements. Other tribes will look closely at liberalization of requirements for tribal membership since this would allow entry of substantial new numbers into the Indian fishing industry.

A number of tribes have protested vigorously against the practice of Indians leasing boats from non-Indians. This often turns out to be a scheme in which the Indian fishes the non-Indian's boat, using his treaty right status, but the non-Indian enjoys a share of the treaty fishing income in the form of "rental". There have been disputes between tribes over the practice of allowing non-Indian spouses or relatives to fish on Indian boats. Some of these disputes have been settled by tribes meeting in treaty area groups; others remain unresolved.

C. The Issue of Inter-Tribal Allocation.

A far more serious and immediate issue overshadowing all the others is that of inter-tribal allocation of fish. Until 1974, when U.S. v. Washington was decided in favor of the tribes, all of the tribes were bound together in a common alliance against the State of Washington. This common interest was sufficiently powerful that it overrode preexisting tribal conflicts, jealousies and status relationships. However, within a few years of the decision, it became apparent that the conflict between tribes was going to increase. Soon complaints were being filed in federal court by South Puget Sound tribes complaining of interceptions by North Puget Sound tribes. North and South Puget Sound tribes together complained of interceptions by tribes fishing in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the ocean. Terminal area tribes (tribes whose usual and accustomed grounds include the natal rivers and bays of returning stocks of fish) attacked tribes fishing further out on mixed stocks of fish which included these stocks. They invoked the "weak-stock" principle, i.e., restricting fisheries on mixed stocks, which included a component of weak stocks, in order to protect those stocks. And more recently, conflict has arisen between the Washington coastal tribes and Columbia River tribes because the coastal tribes fish on stocks of fish in the ocean off the Washington coast migrating to the Columbia River.

It is apparent to all that the salmon resource presents the tribes with a closed system. Harvest in any part of the system is always accompanied by consequences for other parts of the system.

There has also been a change in the location of the tribal fisheries. Prior to the U.S. v. Washington decision, the majority of Pacific Northwest Indian

fishing was done in river and estuary net fisheries, though historically Indian fishing grounds included large marine areas. Now, more and more Indian fishermen are obtaining boats and gear to participate in marine fisheries moving up and down Puget Sound and in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the ocean. Each year, more of these larger and better equipped boats enter the fishery. These growing marine fisheries often take place in usual and accustomed grounds of tribes which overlap. The result is that increasing numbers of Indian fishermen are competing for the same numbers of fish or, are intercepting fish before they reach the waters of other tribes.

The tribes have devised a number of methods of trying to resolve these inter-tribal allocation issues. There are treaty area conferences, and there is also the institution of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. This is an inter-tribal agency established in 1974 by the treaty tribes to coordinate fisheries management.

However, none of these coordinating bodies has provided a fully satisfactory forum for the resolution of inter-tribal allocation issues. The tribes have been taking their cases against each other to court. The federal courts have grown increasingly impatient at playing the role of "fishmaster".

The problem has been made more complex by the entry of a new player into fisheries management -- the federal government.

In 1979, Congress passed the Fisheries Conservation and Management Act, also known as the Magnuson Act.¹¹ The Act asserted U.S. jurisdiction over waters out to 200 miles. It left the states nominally free to continue regulating fisheries within their waters, i.e., within 3 miles of the coast and all inland waters, while undertaking to regulate fishing in the 197 miles of ocean extending outward from the state waters. In practice, the federal regulatory system and the State regulatory system interlock. Since 1983, the federal government has enacted regulations which impose quotas on tribes fishing in ocean waters. These quotas are a product of decisions made by the regional management councils that function as advisory bodies under the Magnuson Act. The councils are made up of federal and state officials and industry representatives. In the case of the Pacific Fisheries Management Council, there is also one tribal representative. The councils have acted in close coordination with the officials of Washington and Oregon to implement agreements made by these two States with various terminal area tribes. The States enter into agreements with tribes controlling fish spawning rivers. These agreements are negotiated between the State and each terminal area group with no participation from other tribes. The agreements impact other tribes' fisheries because they provide for escapement levels and harvests in the river which can only be achieved by restricting the fisheries of other tribes who are not party to the agreements. This has been a source of strife which has led to litigation.¹²

In an effort to assist in out of court settlement of these disputes, the federal District Court in Washington has ordered all of the tribes of that State to participate in a compulsory mediation scheme. A formal plan has been approved by the court and a mediator has been appointed and his position is fully funded. At this writing, the system has not yet gone into operation and it is not possible to predict the likelihood of its success. However, the mediation system is not designed to provide a means of binding dispute resolution, and, in the absence of agreement of the parties, will merely serve as a way station to litigation.

In the courts, there is perplexity as to what principles ought to govern the allocation of fish between tribes. A variety of principles may be applied, either

alone or in conjunction with others. For example, one compilation¹³ has enumerated the following:

- The historical use by each fishing tribe, the history of participation by each party in the fishery and the desirability of avoiding undue disruption of existing fisheries.
- Whether the tribe has exercised due diligence in the pursuit of the fishery or voluntarily abandoned it.
- The total cumulative impact of all fisheries activities upon such stocks and whether a fishery will "prevent over-fishing".
- The contribution of each harvesting tribe to the preservation of the proper habitat necessary for the survival and development of fish during migratory passage.
- The cultural, social and economic dependence of the tribal harvesters on the fisheries resource, the harm incurred in foregoing harvest, and due consideration of social and economic concerns.
- The relative values of fisheries operated by each sovereign.
- The establishment of fisheries regimes to maintain stocks at optimum productivity or optimum yield.
- The impact of a fishery on weak stocks in terms of de minimus considerations.
- Whether the allocation is "fair and equitable to all fishermen" or will award an "excessive share of the fisheries resource" to any one particular group.
- Whether a fishery promotes efficiency in the utilization of a fishery's resource.
- Whether a harvester is experiencing "some real or substantial injury or damage" caused by another harvester's activities or mismanagement.
- Whether the fishery allocation will comply with Indian treaty rights.

V. CONCLUSION

The revitalization of the Northwest Indian fishing economy has unquestionably brought financial well-being to many individual Indian fishermen and Indian communities. This is not to say that these communities can yet enjoy an overall standard of living comparable to their non-Indian counterparts. But the Indian economy in these Indian communities is far healthier than it was before 1974. Indian treaty fishing has provided a meaningful occupation for thousands of Northwest Indian people. It has generated millions of dollars of income for Indians and, in the process, revitalized the Indian communities and strengthened tribal governments. But there is a storm cloud hanging over the Northwest

tribes: Inter-tribal allocation. It has transformed former allies into enemies and has provided opportunities for State governments to ally themselves with tribes against other tribes. Whether mediation will provide a significant solution to this problem remains to be seen. But the Northwest Indian tribes appear to have carried cultural and legal principles governing treaty Indian fishing to their limits. They are now in the uncharted waters of inter-tribal competition for a limited resource and the annals of Indian treaty litigation may soon grow as courts adopt new rules to govern the rights of tribes against other tribes. A new body of law may develop; the law of inter-tribal rights.

END NOTES

1. Gordon W. Hewes, "Aboriginal Use of Fishery Resources in Northwestern North America", (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1947).
2. See, Philip Drucker, Cultures Of The North Pacific Coast, (San Francisco, Chandler Publishing Company, 1965).
3. Barbara Lane, "Political And Economic Aspects Of Indian-White Culture Contact In Western Washington In The Mid-19th Century", U.S. Department of Interior, on file in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington in United States v. State of Washington, Civil Docket No. 9312.
4. 302 F. Supp. 899 (1969).
5. United States v. State of Washington, 384 F. Supp. 312.
6. 443 U.S. 658 (1979). For a history of the Northwest Indian fishing rights controversy and its aftermath, see, Faye G. Cohen, Treaties On Trial (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1986).
7. Northwest Indian Fisheries Annual Report, 1982, p. 32. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, Olympia, Washington.
8. Les McConnell, "Economic Contributions Made By Indian Tribes In Washington State", Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Fisheries, March 13, 1987, Table in unnumbered Appendix.
9. Indian combination boats or gillnetters may have only 1 or 2 crew members. Crew members receive a share of the boat's income.
10. Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission "News", No. 3, 1986, p. 3, Interview with Gerald "G.I." James.
11. 16 U.S.C. 1801-1882 (1982).
12. Makah v. Baldrige, U.S. District Court of Western Washington, No. C87-747.
13. Morisset, "The Legal Standards For Allocating The Fisheries Resource", 22 Idaho L.R. 609 (1986).

POWERLESSNESS CAUSES DEPENDENCE:
COMMENT ON THE PAPERS BY ZIONTZ AND IVERSON

Ronald L. Trosper

Economic dependence results when a community enters economic exchange from a position of weakness. Economic dependence is a subset of general dependence. In economic exchange, economists typically assume that neither party is in a superior position. Exchange occurs because each desires a good held by the other. When an exchange occurs, the ratio of the quantities of goods traded provides an exchange rate. I have agreed with Fred Hoxie to present this comment for a fee plus travel expenses. If my comment is sufficiently insightful, neither of us feel exploited; in fact each may feel he received the better deal. For me, the more valuable part of the exchange is the chance to join friends to discuss important and interesting topics. Had I been in a stronger position, I might have changed the exchange rate to 10 times the fee plus a first class plane ride. Fred would then feel he had gained but little from the exchange. A fundamental theorem of welfare economics, that all gain from trade, would be true in either case. But the distribution of the gains from trade depends upon the distribution of power.

Analysis of increasing and decreasing dependence should examine exchange rates, which are the dependent variables. To explain changes in such rates, we should look to the determinants of power. In this comment, I will illustrate this approach using the examples provided by Ziontz and Iverson. The papers on the fur trade reported exchange rates in different relative power positions and also provide examples.

First, however, I want to remark further on the analysis of powerlessness. Peter Blau's examination of power in social exchange provides a useful structure for study of the determinants of power. In Exchange and Power in Social Life, he writes:

Individuals who need a service another has to offer have the following alternatives: First, they can supply him with a service that he wants badly enough to induce him to offer his service in return, though only if they have the resources required for doing so; this will lead to reciprocal exchanges. Second, they may obtain the needed service elsewhere, assuming that there are alternative suppliers; this also will lead to reciprocal exchanges but in different partnerships. Third, they can coerce him to furnish the service, provided they are capable of doing so, in which case they would establish domination over him. Fourth, they may learn to resign themselves to do without this service, possibly finding some substitute for it, which would require that they change the values that determine their needs. Finally, if they are not able or willing to choose any of these alternatives, they have no other choice but to comply with his wishes, since he can make continued supply of the needed service contingent on their compliance. In the situation specified, the supply of services inevitably generates power. The absence of the first four alternatives defines the conditions of power in general.¹

If a person or a group is unable to engage one of the four conditions of independence, they have no alternative but dependence. Reversing the process,

removing dependence, consists of developing one or more of the four alternatives.

As we study the role of economic dependence in Indian communities, we should look at the exchanges and the causes of the observed rates of exchange. I would resist, however, study of these from a narrow viewpoint, through the sole use of economic analysis. Economics at present develops theories valid when ownership and needs are given. This covers only the first two of Blau's four conditions of power. Many economists go further and eliminate monopoly as a possibility, leaving only reciprocal exchange left to study. Historians, however, do not have the luxury to examine only situations to which their theories apply.

In Indian affairs, because both use and ownership of land is exchanged through coercion as well as market exchange, analysis has to become more complex. More is involved than the treatment of land as a commodity: one must ask why the price for land is so low, and why the option of not selling has been removed. Federal law gives a federal entity the potential to have a monopoly over the fruits of the land. The supremacy of federal law also has replaced the ability of local force to overcome Indians. A former chairman of my tribe says that "lawyers are the new warriors;" he is correct. Lawyers can affect the disposition of federal coercive power.

In applying Blau's list of four alternatives, consider the service of a nice salmon dinner. In the mid-nineteenth century, settlers obtained this service through purchase from Indians. Neither party was dependent. As boats and netting improved, non-Indians were able to find an alternative supply of fish, themselves. Once nearly the entire run was captured before reaching Indian fishing grounds, the Indians found themselves with no way to obtain, let alone sell, a salmon dinner. When the state prohibited fishing at traditional sites, the right to use Indian property had been taken, and no method was available for Indians to regain it. To eat, Indians had to enter the labor market or find other goods to trade. The exchange rate for fish had fallen to zero; Indians were paid nothing. Not until 1979 could they find a source of power strong enough to return the right to fish.

Remarkably, only ten years have been needed for Indians to reverse the consequences of dependence. The exchange rate now is far above zero. Not only do Indians obtain the market price for the fish, they also earn wages and profits processing fish. The new problem, distributing the returns among Indians, however, identifies a different service needed by Indians: a political service, determination of methods of fair division of fish among Indians. What will be the price of this service? Will Indians be able to find another source besides the federal government?

Using the federal judicial system or other non-Indian institution for solution of a common property problem may be very expensive. Because of belief in private property and individual liberty, American culture has a poor track record in the management of common resources. When the characteristics of a resource make enforcement of private property expensive, there are no other institutions readily available. The literature in economics shows this. The list provided by Zientz shows that "there is perplexity as to what principles ought to govern the allocation of fish between tribes." I would advise Washington Indians to find an alternative to reliance on descendants of settlers for solution to this problem. Not only are court fights expensive; in this case there may be no service available for exchange. American law cannot handle the problem. American thought is also weak. For instance, major parts of the profession of economics even deny the existence of "external effects" as a problem when

private property is fully instituted.² We should not be surprised that the outcome of American litigation failed to address this problem.

The common property aspect of fisheries did not appear today, however; I disagree with Ziontz that Northwest Indians are in "uncharted waters." Population density along the Pacific was high prior to the arrival of European settlers. What principles were used by Indians then to define communities' rights to take fish? Has significant use of boats really created a new situation, or did tribes share a common resource before the Stevens treaties? Can Indian leadership, by use of those principles, fashion a solution to the problem? If so, resource managers in the State of Washington may themselves wish to purchase a service from Indians.

Many of you may find my emphasis on exchange rates to add little to the analysis. This is due to the dramatic changes Ziontz reports in the Pacific coast salmon fishery. The case of cattle raising is different. The shifts in exchange rates have been more subtle. The identity of the items exchanged shift as well.

Iverson surveys the changes which have occurred in Western ranching. Cattlemen were once the leaders of a sector that seemed to power economic growth. Rail heads such as Dodge City served as capital and as symbol of this age. What happened? Why did the position of Indians change, sometimes for the worse and sometimes for the better? Examination of Blau's four conditions of power in the cases cited by Iverson provides some answers.

What was the situation of the four conditions of power on the Fort Belknap Reservation in the early twentieth century? Who wanted services, what services were desired, and who could provide them best? Indian and Non-Indian cattlemen wanted access to the range and to water. Since the Indian agent could provide both, he exchanged his services with the highest bidder. As a member of non-Indian society, he valued both the money and the status which white ranchers could provide. Even if Indians could offer as much money, the value of status in their society was not valued by most Indian agents.

The power of the Indian agent came from military conquest and the dominance of federal officials in relations with Indians. He controlled access to the primary resource. Whoever gained the right to run cattle on that land acknowledged the agent's power and became dependent upon him. What were the exchanges and exchange rates which resulted? As the exchanges changed, why did they do so?

I suggest the general pattern can be sorted into four different types of dependent relations. Arthur Ray's teeter totter applies to movements to and from among these types, when they do not occur in succession.

1. Indians establish herds on reservations while settlers occupy the land ceded by treaty. There is either no exchange with outsiders, or cattle are exchanged for goods. In both cases, Indians are in a favorable position, able to obtain fair prices, because no non-Indian ranchers are available to Indian agents. The Gros Ventres at Fort Belknap began to herd cattle. By 1910, Iverson reports, there were significant Indian herds at the Blackfeet, Standing Rock, Cheyenne River and Pine Ridge reservations.

2. As the population near reservations grows, one or more large cattle operations obtain leases from the Indian agent. The total proceeds to Indians falls dramatically. Indians receive only a portion of the rental due them for the land. Further, overgrazing reduces the future productivity of the land. The Matador Cattle Company leased land at Fort Belknap. Similar leases occurred on other reservations. I disagree with the quotation from Clow which attributes

Indian dependence to the leases. The leases are evidence of powerlessness and dependence and also increase the dependence further by creating poverty.

In spite of leasing problems, nominal ownership remains with Indians. This recipe for dependence has potential for change.

(3) If an Indian agent, when leasing to non-Indians, obtained a good price and was paid in cash for his services, he was vulnerable to investigation. The coercive force of federal law could be turned in the Indian's favor. Re-establishment of tribal government could also increase the ability of Indians to use their own land. The Indian Reorganization Act, however, did not fully return power to tribal governments; the Department of the Interior gave itself approval powers in the new tribal constitutions. Nonetheless, revelations of scandals reduced the power of the executive branch and allowed Indians to begin to use their own land. Often tribal councils have been run by Indian ranchers, who still receive a disproportionate share of the tribal estate. The agency superintendent also retains leverage over the council because he still controls access to the land.

4. Diversified economies next reduce the influence of ranchers in tribal life. In particular, the growth of tribal government based on federal programs can create other sources of revenue, reducing the power of an agency superintendent. On reservations such as mine, the land base can support cattle, timber, hydroelectric, and recreational industries. Diversification is feasible. Because other reservations are not so fortunate, they may be unable to enter this fourth position.

Because beef was traded on a national or international scale, some aspects of the exchange rates established were outside of the control of ranchers, Indians, and agents. It is for this reason that I would emphasize that payments in terms of status in either Non-Indian or Indian society should be included as part of the exchange undertaken. When Indians return to control of the range, their dependence on the market also returns. As Iverson points out, that dependence is always there, for whoever controlled the range. From the point of view of structural analysis of a reservation, however, the national market is an independent factor.

One reason we have seen exchanges and exchange rates move in favor of Indians is that several post World War II developments have undercut the monopoly held by the Secretary of the Interior and his subordinates on reservations. The Indian Claims Commission increased the value of the services of lawyers.³ The War on Poverty provided transfers of funds through the Office of Economic Opportunity, now the Administration for Native Americans. The Department of Education provides education moneys. Housing and Urban Development provides houses and sanitation services. Indian managers in the BIA have become responsive to Indian communities rather than non-Indian communities on reservations.

The United States is governed by a three-headed sovereign. Indians have become able to use the legislative and judicial branches to take effective control of reservation land away from presidential appointees and State governments. Charles Wilkinson has explained that the judicial culture in the United States came to regard treaties as legitimate and important agreements which deserve enforcement.⁴ Meanwhile, as industrialization has reduced the political strength of agriculture and extractive industries, Congress has become more sympathetic to Indian demands. Conflicts of interest in the Executive Branch, however, has limited Indian attempts to become independent of the Secretary of the Interior.

Before concluding my comment, I would like to classify the policies of my tribe, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation, into Blau's four conditions. First, we are becoming providers of some appreciated services. Residents of western Montana value scenery and the environment. After the Salish and Kootenai Tribes established through court battles that they had the right to manage the shoreline of Flathead Lake, we established a Shoreline Protection Board. Our management has surprised many non-Indians on the reservation, who now praise our management efforts. Our establishment of the Mission Mountain Wilderness and opposition to hydroelectric development on the Flathead River also created support. We now charge non-members for recreational use of our land.

I was amazed one day to hear a local businessman say, "Put the Indians in charge." He felt that the tribe managers better than many other public agencies. We hope to justify this support by operating the electric distribution system on the reservation. Our task should be easy: to show we can manage it better than the Bureau of Indian Affairs. In addition to usual BIA incompetence, the Bureau has allowed the local non-Indian irrigators to control the project, further reducing the quality of the power distribution system. Our legal warriors are now in federal court to assert our self-determination rights.

Second, we have reduced our dependence on the Federal government by hiring our own experts in many fields: law, economics, education, health, biology, computers. Trained tribal members such as myself work for the tribe. We can provide technical services more cheaply than consultants, and with better understanding of the local situation. Some of the technical people in the BIA resist erosion of their control over our resources; but they are fighting a losing battle.

Third, we have joined other tribes in using the coercive power of the federal courts. Each victory, when it increase the exchange rate for an asset, further strengthens our position, by giving us alternatives. For instance, when we succeeded in raising the annual rental for our Kerr dam site from \$2.4 million to \$9 million, our dependence on income from the sale of sawtimber decreased. Bureau foresters repeatedly asked, "Don't you need the money?" The answer was no. If the council did not like a timber sale, they no longer had to fear postponing revenue if the sale had to be redesigned. Morale among Bureau foresters plummeted after this loss of power. Since they can no longer manage our forest as they wish, they have been finding posts at other reservations, where the exchange rates are better. Although our Kerr rental has increased, it still remains at about one-fifth of the full economic value of the electricity produced.

Fourth, we are reducing our needs to a limited extent. Part of this is revival and preservation of the traditional culture. Our college teaches both native languages. Adults with no job-related need for the language are learning it. Alcoholism is under attack. My general impression, however, is that we are increasing rather than decreasing our needs for goods and services produced by the non-Indian society. As we decrease our powerlessness, however, we obtain those goods and services at a better price. In addition, increased self-esteem from success on the first three itself leads to further appreciation for and development of traditional culture.

I conclude that overcoming dependence can be best understood by examining the sources of powerlessness. Peter Blau's analysis of power in the context of social exchange provides a useful schema for separating powerlessness into categories. Reduction in dependence for Indians who should own fishing grounds

and who should operate cattle ranches both can be understood with his schema. An empirical method for identifying decreases and increases in dependence is to examine the exchange rates for the trades which occur. But I stress that the fact of exchange is not the source of dependence; rather, the relative power position of Indians is the source. Attention to narrowly defined "economic" exchange alone, however, only covers two of the four conditions of powerlessness.

END NOTES

1. Peter M. Blau, Exchange and Power in Social Life (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1964), 118-119.
2. The definition of exchange rate for a common property resource should look to the "net rental" of the resource. Many economists have pointed out that regulated competition for a common resource can lead to elimination of net return through excessive investment in equipment and control through imposition of inefficiencies upon harvest. Crutchfield and Pontecorvo explain this point for the pacific salmon fishery. See James A. Crutchfield and Giulio Pontecorvo, The Pacific Salmon Fisheries: A Study of Irrational Conservation (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969). Their subtitle states their main point: American regulation of a fishery reduces economic rent to zero. For a review of the work of economists who do believe there is an issue, see Anthony C. Fisher, Resource and Environmental Economics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). On p. 233, he complains that economic analysis of environmental problems are ignored. I attribute this stubborn ignorance to cultural causes.
3. Henry F. Dobyns, "Therapeutic Experience of Responsible Democracy" in Stuart Levine and Nancy Lurie, editors, The American Indian Today (Baltimore: Penquin Books, 1968), 268-291.
4. Charles F. Wilkinson, American Indians, Time and the Law: Native Societies in a Modern Constitutional Democracy (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987)

THE NORTHWEST SALMON FISHERY

Larry Kinley,
Chairman
Lummi Indian Business Council

I am an American Indian commercial fisherman by trade and, I also serve as Chairman of the Lummi Indian Tribe. I appreciate the opportunity from my perspectives of Tribal commerce and governance to address this academic forum on "Overcoming Economic Dependency."

I believe we are on the threshold of dramatic changes in Indian Country. As historians and anthropologists with responsibilities to document, analyze, and instruct present and future generations, as to evolving realities, I urge you to become an involved advocate of our future history. Our future endeavors towards Tribal self-governance and economic independence will require an understanding by the predominant non-Indian society which surrounds us. Academicians, including those of you gathered at this conference, must shoulder the commitment and responsibility to educate others.

AMERICAN INDIAN PEOPLE ARE DIFFERENT AND WILL REMAIN SO DESPITE POPULAR EXPECTATIONS

There are approximately 375 Federally-recognized distinct American Indian, Alaskan Native, and Aleut Tribes and societies in America today. We are not remnants of a colorful past, we are the next generation from several thousand years ago making plans for our future. Yet it always seems that non-Indians are inherently bothered by our continued difference.

I offer you the insights of Milner Ball, Caldwell Professor of Constitution Law of the University of Georgia, as a discussion of Tribalism and difference in the modern society:

Tribes also offer us hope. The history of the majority's relation to Indians is replete with metaphors of impotence: an oncoming modern world system that could not be altered, manifest destiny that could not be denied, an overpowering wave of non-Indian population inundating Indian country, an irresistible march of civilization. These are the metaphors of people who think events, systems, and institutions are beyond their control and therefore beyond their responsibility.

Tribalism offers the hope of empowerment. Non-Indians have consistently resisted acknowledging the validity of the way Indians live together and govern themselves. Tribalism is typically viewed as a lower form of Western society, and Indians are perceived as aspiring, or needing to aspire, to the higher life of non-Indians. The tribe, however, is not a lower evolutionary form of our society. It took root in this land long before the coming of the Europeans. Remarkably, it has adapted, survived, grown, been renewed. It is a different reality.

I do not mean to romanticize the tribe. That would be to trivialize it. I do mean to say tribes demonstrate that the political structures designed by 18th-century newcomers and the society that has followed are not the only way to live in this land.

Tribes teach us that the non-Indian system is not the only American way, that the dominant structures are contingent, an invention that can be reinvented. Just the fact of the tribes' continuing existence presses a range of fundamental questions, including these: Where are Indian nations to fit in our federal system? Should they be made states? Should they be related to the United States by treaty? What of the possibility of treaty federalism?

Such questions prompt us to explore new realities. We are challenged to revise our fundamental institutions. We are given opportunity to overcome belittlement.

By not recognizing and accepting the different Indian reality, we deny ourselves its gifts and a wider horizon. Milner S. Ball, "Constitution, Court, Indian Tribes," American Bar Foundation Research Journal, Volume 1, Winter 1987, page 138.

The Tribalism Ball acknowledges has survived despite a Federal/State court system which has systematically undermined our sovereign status; despite a Congress which continues to usurp our treaty-protected resources and powers under the guise of Constitutional law; despite a Federal bureaucracy which has historically inhibited our Tribal economic independency; despite a society which traditionally has looked the other way when our rights and resources were ravaged by greed; despite cycles of generational poverty and dependency crippling the self-esteem of our Indianness and fractionating families; and, despite the shallow recorded history of our existence unable to document in printed word our courage and will to survive as peoples. As we all know, American society has carefully constructed many masks and mirrors to justify placing the blame of economic dependence on the American Indian doorstep. Despite all this, we have endured and survived.

TRIBAL ECONOMICS: PAST TO PRESENT

In its simplest terms, economics is a term which serves as that very broad label referring to a system within society for distributing goods and services and, thereby, ensures the distribution of wealth among all the members of a society. It is often used as if there is only one way of understanding the system for distributing wealth, and it is over disagreements between reasonable people about the best economic systems that wars have been waged and are now being fought.

It should be no surprise to anyone, therefore, that one of the first contests between Indian Nations in North America and the European colonists was over economics - the delivery of goods and services and the distribution of wealth. Indian Nations with strong economies met destitute European colonists who lacked all of the necessary skills and capabilities to provide for themselves. It was the European colonist who had to depend on the strength of tribal economies to survive. While depending for life and limb on the nations which surrounded them, European settlers did not learn how to live in tribal economies, but adapted tribal economic systems to their own use. With the backing of well formed European economies, colonists became increasingly dependent on the countries of Europe. Only when colonists developed their own capacity to trade among themselves, with the Indian Nations, with European countries and other countries in the world were they able to reduce their heavy dependence.

While the colonial economies grew stronger, their capacity to compete with Indian nations for common resources also increased. The economic dominance of Indian nations began to change rapidly, but not until the middle 19th century could it be said that tribal economies began to collapse.

The "Indian Nation's economic dependence" on the United States of America is now referred to by many as the problem which now must be overcome. I suggest that this proposition limits our ability to deal with the actual conditions of Indian Nations. The more appropriate issue is, "What steps must be taken to renew tribal economies, and thereby, permit their free growth?"

Indian Nations in the western hemisphere have struggled to maintain economic self-sufficiency since the wave of colonial invasion from Europe began in 1492. In South and Central American and the Caribbean region, this struggle has been bitterly waged from the very beginning, and continues with violent confrontations in wars and skirmishes from the tip of Argentina to the northern border of Mexico. The basic issues of dispute are land and natural resources. The principal disputants are Indian Nations and the States which were formed on top of those nations since the early 1820s.

In North America, European colonization and subsequent competition between Indian Nations and the vanguard of colonial Europe did not begin to have an impact until the 1600s. Indeed, my nation, the Lummi didn't feel the influence of distant intrusions until about 1800. It was only at the beginning of the 19th century that western coastal nations began to enter into trade relations with the Russians, Spanish, Japanese and later the English.

The Lummi Nation and nations all along the western coast traded for fifty years with these people before we came into active contact with traders from the United States. During those five decades, the coastal economies of Indian nations were radically changed. Our age-old system of economies might now be described as potlatch - give away. It was a system which tightly bound our peoples and ensured a stable social, political and cultural life for our peoples. As long as we traded with nations on the mainland and in the islands of the Pacific which shared a similar economic system, we remained economically strong. Trading with the Russians, Spanish, Japanese and the English, however, changed the natural balance of our economy. Because these traders from distant lands had no need for what the Lummi and neighboring nations naturally produced in excess of our needs, our internal economies began to suffer from dislocation. Furs and fish, which had been essential to our economies, but were not the dominant produce, rapidly became the items of demand. Russian and Spanish traders brought kettles to trade with us in exchange for furs. These kettles became so desirable among our people that the demand for our own baskets declined rapidly. This decline in demand displaced our basket weavers. Gray wool blankets were used to trade for our furs. These too became desirable replacements for our domestically woven dog and goat wool blankets. Iron and copper tools were also traded to our people, and these began to replace our own internally crafted weapons and tools.

Just as the United States now suffers internal economic dislocation by the successful introduction of Japanese automobiles, electronics and food stuffs, the Lummi Nation began to suffer from an unfavorable balance of trade. Lummi labor couldn't compete with the products being traded for furs and fish. Just as the United States now risks the loss of textile workers because of the large amounts of imported shoes and clothing from South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong and China, the Lummi experienced the loss of tool makers, textile weavers, basket weavers, carpenters, artisans, and fishermen specialized in whaling, sealing

and open-sea fishing. The Lummi economy responded to trading demands for highly specialized goods. In the mean time, the Lummi people began to lose internal capabilities to cloth, feed, house and otherwise support themselves.

By the mid-19th century, the Lummi people began to experience the collapse of our strong social and political system. Because our system of economy was based on the accumulation of wealth and the giving away of wealth, and this system was intimately connected with all other aspects of our culture, the rapid shift from a multi-layered self-sufficient economy to a narrowly based fur-trapping and fisheries economy broke down our way of life. Instead of a few gathering and then distributing wealth, virtually anyone could accumulate wealth by trapping and then trading furs to the outsiders in exchange for desirable basic goods. The introduction of paper and metal currency by the United States and England further forced the collapse of our economy. In modern terms, one might say that the fur pelt and the fish inflated in price so much that they made our potlatch economy become so devalued that it collapsed.

The United States took up where the Russians, Spaniards, Japanese and English left off by 1850. Like their predecessors, the United States traders didn't want what the Lummi economy naturally produced - they wanted our raw materials. They also wanted our land. The skills of our people developed of hundreds of generations became obsolete. We became raw material extractors for the benefit of the U.S. economy. In exchange, we became dependent on the goods and services produced by the U.S. economy. The result was the nearly total disintegration of the Lummi economy. Lummi became an economic colony of the United States of America, as did virtually all other Indian Nations.

To this day, the Lummi Nation and all other Indian Nations serve as raw material colonial reserves which export natural wealth to the United States.

Lummi people moved from a productive self-sustaining economy which had served for hundreds of generations, to an unproductive dependency on a alien economic system which took more from the Lummi than it returned. The Lummi Nation became a society of consumers who produced virtually none of the things necessary for human sustenance. What raw materials we had left to us, like fisheries, timber and wildlife became raw produce beneficial directly to the U.S. economy and a net negative asset to the Lummi economy. We began to sell our raw materials to the United States only, and in return we received currency - money that could only be spent in the U.S. economy.

American currency, the final means of exchange for our labor and our raw materials had no value directly among Lummi. It was not used to buy labor, goods and services from the U.S. economy. Dependence on U.S. currency, goods and services, marked the point of total Lummi economic collapse. Our self-sustaining economic and trade system had been completely replaced by a colonial market economy which mainly benefited the U.S. economy. For the first time in our long history, the Lummi people experienced poverty and destitution. For 150 years, the Lummi have suffered under the unfavorable balance of trade, exploitation of our resources by outsiders and the devaluation of Lummi labor.

In other words, the Lummi economy was in about the same condition of disarray in the late 1940s and early 1950s as the European economies and the economies of the Third World. Now, our economy, in virtually every sense, suffers from comparable conditions of Less Developed Countries around the world.

When the United States of America joined other states in the world to rebuild the global economy in the late 1940s, Indian Nations inside the U.S. called for a new effort to rebuild Indian Country - long suffering from

dislocation, poverty and economic collapse. The Lummi Nation was among those nations calling for the economic the political self-determination of Indian Nations. We pressed for the adoption of resolutions through the National Congress of American Indians and we worked to encourage cooperation with U.S. government leaders. We believed, then as we do now, that the self-determination of our nation is essential to our social, economic, political and cultural security. The key to our view of self-determination was, and is now, the freedom and flexibility to rebuild our economy.

The United States government responded to our requests for economic freedom by forcing many of our people to leave our reservations from 1950 to the middle 1960s. Some of our greatest thinkers and our best talent was taken from our lands and moved into the U.S. economy. Instead of helping our nations, the United States moved to take our last and greatest asset - our people - an asset that would guarantee our ability to rebuild our economies. Like Third World countries of that period, Indian Nations suffered a "brain drain" of major and devastating proportions. If Lummi people and Indian Nations were made of weaker stuff, we would have totally collapsed and disappeared. We had suffered virtually every measure of destruction that any society in the world had experienced at any time in history.

Our innate survival instincts and the small crack in the door that was known as the Great Society of the Kennedy-Johnson Administrations created flexible opportunities for Indian reconstruction. We took advantage of this slim opportunity. For the first time since our early association with the United States of America, the Lummi Nation could exercise a measure of control over political and economic decision-making. We had access to revenue independent of control by the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs. We could begin making our own decisions again. We experienced a measure of political and economic freedom during the short period that followed 1964 that resulted in the beginning of Lummi reconstruction. We began to attract talented Lummis back to the reservation. We began to build homes, develop enterprises and deliver social and health services to our own people. We used our best thinking, our most experienced economic and political talent. Lummi people were inventive again. We were beginning the long process of rebuilding a Lummi economy. The Lummi Nation, like many other Indian Nations began a process of rapid recovery. Our nation was viewed by many as a primary example of Indian Economic Success.

Key elements in our growing economic recovery were: Internal and local economic decision-making by Lummis, a developing flow of trade from Lummi to the U.S. and other foreign economies, growing Lummi technical, planning and decision-making capabilities and experience; a capital and resource flow into the Lummi Nation where the multiplier factor was an estimated 30 times every dollar coming into the Lummi economy. As Mr. Dennis R. Gibb, Vice President of Bear Stearns & Company observed in April of this year, "Due to the geographic isolation of most Indian reservations, and the low relative population density of the surrounding non-Indian areas, reservation economies have the ability, if correctly fostered, to be the economic engine of their regions." The Lummi Nation and many other Indian Nations were well on their way to becoming "economic engines" in their regions.

For a few years, the Lummi Nation and many Indian Nations saw sustained changes and wrestled with the problems of developing economies. As suddenly as it began, however, the economic miracle that was to be stalled. Our successes and our growing productivity ran into a two-part obstacle: Fears by State governments and non-Indian businesses that we would compete more

successfully than our non-Indian neighbors for business, and a growing desire in the Bureau of Indian Affairs and other U.S. government agencies to take control over our economic activity.

State governments feared our economic successes and our economic creativity. They wanted revenues that were beginning to flow into Tribal coffers to flow into state coffers instead. What State government officials and non-Indian businesses failed to comprehend was that our success would eventually improve their own economic conditions. Their fears worked to obstruct our continuing efforts to recover.

BIA regulations and State government interference in our growing economic success combined to stall our recovery. US government bureaucrats moved to redirect our economic planning toward industrial models that would clearly benefit the U.S. economy and State economies and reverse our efforts to build self-sustaining economies. Just as the U.S. controlled World Bank pushed for the installation of industrial models in the Third World, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the U.S. Department of Commerce pressed to install industrial models on Indian Reservations. Both efforts failed, but both efforts also created new kinds of economic, social and political dislocation. During the last ten years, Indian economic efforts have been stalled and even reversed as a result of U.S. government economic policies; and State government uncertainties.

EXPLOITATION OF TRIBAL RESOURCES AND RIGHTS BY NON-INDIANS IS A COMMON THEME: PAST AND PRESENT

The papers presented by Al Ziontz on Indian Fishing and Peter Iverson on Indian ranching document a common theme of the past: exploitation of Tribal resources and rights for economic gain by non-Indians. In the case of Pacific Northwest treaty fishing rights, the State governments attempted to halt or control Tribal treaty-protected fishing activities to benefit non-Indian commercial fishing interest and accommodate sport fishermen. In the example of cattle ranching on the plains, Indian grazing lands were sold or leased to corporations or private ranchers. In both arenas, the Bureau of Indian Affairs either accommodated this exploitation or simply ignored Tribal protests as our trustee representing the United States. Tribal initiative in both instances have preserved those resources and rights available today.

As historians, I'm sure you're aware of the sad history of the United States treatment of our treaties and peoples. But tribal struggles against exploitation of rights and resources continues today. Let me cite some examples of the modern techniques to usurp the remaining American Indian resources and rights.

IRS REWRITES HISTORY TO MAKE ITS "LEGAL" CLAIMS

As documented in the Ziontz paper, the Lummi Tribe along with other Pacific Northwest Tribes enjoying treaty protected fishing rights have expanded commercial operations.

Pacific Northwest Indian Tribes in Western Washington State specifically reserved "the right of taking fish at usual and accustomed grounds and stations..."in their five treaties with the United States between 1854-56. Seven times in this century the Supreme Court has upheld our rights to fish for commercial, ceremonial, and subsistence purposes. Tribal fishermen are licensed

and managed by the Tribes as the fish are considered a treaty-protected resource.

The Internal Revenue Service has attempted since 1982 to impose Federal income taxes on Tribal fishermen's income derived from commercial harvest in treaty-designated waters including 60 Lummi fishermen. Two separate Interior Department Solicitor opinions (1983 and 1985) support the Tribes' position that this is an unlawful diminishment of our treaty-protected resources. The Justice Department determined (December 1985) that the IRS position was "the sounder view of the law" under the absurd notion that income tax exemption language should have been included in the treaties. The first Federal income tax laws weren't enacted until 1913, over 60 years after our treaties were signed!

In July 1986 thirty-three Senators in a bi-partisan letter wrote the Justice Department to "reverse this ill-conceived policy without delay" and added: "Based on established Indian law and court opinions, we find the Justice Department reasoning seriously flawed." The Justice Department responded lamely that it was "a matter for the courts or Congress to decide," and the IRS continued to haul our people into U.S. Tax Court, levy fines, and harass our people.

During the 100th Congress, S. 727 "Indian Fishing Rights" legislation has passed the Senate and companion legislation, H.R. 2792, has passed the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. The House Committee on Ways and Means, demanding jurisdiction on this bill as a tax issue rather than a treaty clarification matter, held a hearing on December 14, 1987. Although the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs represented the administration supporting the measure in previous Senate and House hearings, the Treasury Department appeared before the Select Revenue Measures Sub-committee.

After our long and costly struggle to clarify our legal rights to fish unencumbered by United States taxes, the Treasury Department ominously concedes our fishing right, but leaves the door open to tax other Tribal treaty-protected resources. The Treasury Department stated:

The Administration supports H.R. 2792, while also believing that the bill should be narrowly construed to the issue of fishing rights, and not serve as a precedent for conferring tax-free status of all income derived by Indians from resources that may be covered by treaties.

We have been legally right all along and believe Congress will pass our treaty-clarification measure in the near future. Hopefully, we will have set some precedent. But as historians, I advise that the Treasury Department already plans to prove that history repeats itself. Other Tribal governments will be forced to defend themselves and expend valuable Tribal assets to stop this obvious exploitation.

Since many of you are from Chicago, I request your help in securing passage of H.R. 2792, our "Indian Fishing Rights" legislation. Your local Congressman Dan Rostenkowski serves as Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means. Urge him to pass our bill quickly out of Committee without an amendment.

CONGRESS ALLOWED 90 MILLION ACRES TO BE LOST; COUNTIES NOW SEEK TAXES ON TRIBALLY RESTORED LAND

The Dawes Act of 1887 divided reservations into small acreage plots given to individual Indian residents without Tribal consent. Ninety-million acres of land have been lost to non-Indians and remaining acreage has created heirship problems of unmanageable proportions. The Lummi Reservation is a peninsula jutting into the Pacific Ocean just South of the Canadian border. Although we are a traditional fishing people, virtually all our waterfront acreage was lost to non-Indians. How, you say, could the BIA breach its Trust responsibility?

Our Tribe, located in close proximity to Canada, have natural kin relationships with Canadian Indians. By BIA policy, Canadian Indians cannot own land in Trust. When no Lummi heirs exist, the land has switched to Canadian ownership, reverted to fee status, became delinquent on the County tax rolls, and was sold at public auction.

Lummi land has also been lost due to unscrupulous BIA direction. A local doctor treating Lummi people accepted sizeable prime waterfront acreage in lieu of payment. A County road, serving non-Indian reservation residents, was built over Indian land by the BIA signing away title over Tribal member protest. As State law prohibits recipients of public assistance to own property, the BIA allowed poor Indians to sell their land in order to receive aid. As I stated, the only reason land remains in Indians ownership is because the multiple heirship problems created title uncertainty.

The Lummi Indian Tribe in its economic development efforts is attempting to repurchase these lost lands. The U.S. Senate in considering the Farm Credit Act Amendments of 1987 narrowly passed a measure which would have required Tribal governments to pay County taxes on land repurchased and placed in trust when purchased under special Farmers Home Administration delinquent loan purchase situations. Although this measure had rather limited application, the precedent was indeed dangerous. The measure was defeated, fortunately, during the House-Senate Conference prior to passage. But once again, non-Indian fingers reached for a portion of our resources.

OPPOSITION GROWS TO LIMIT TRIBAL EXERCISE OF LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT POWERS.

The Tribal Tax Status Act of 1982 was a Congressional recognition of the legitimate right of sovereign tribal governments to raise government revenues through taxation. As tribes have begun exercising these powers, opposition has grown.

Prior to the taxation issues, the Lummi Indian Business Council attempted to provide complete commercial/residential sewage facilities for the reservation to address expansion plans. Non-Indian residents opposed the development apparently fearing Tribal control of this necessary facility. After six years of litigation in court, we were finally allowed to proceed with the sewage systems as a Tribal government.

Legislation in the 100th Congress has been introduced and actually passed limiting Tribal taxation capacities. Tribes have successfully utilized bonding authority to acquire corporate operations for economic development. The Budget Reconciliation Act (P.L. 100-203) limits Tribal bonding capacities to "essential government functions such as schools, roads, and government buildings. And, S.

1039/H.R. 2185 the "Indian Non-Discriminatory Tax Act," have been introduced to limit or prohibit Tribal taxation of Indians and non-Indians living within the reservation boundaries.

The various State governments impose taxes within Indian reservations which creates a double tax structure on private businesses producing goods or offering services. Business and Operations taxes by State governments should not be allowed within reservation boundaries to ensure that the incentive to invest in Indian Country are protected from State encroachment.

Unfortunately, this State encroachment inside reservation boundaries has been allowed by Congress despite the sovereign status of Indian Tribes. This arena of Tribal-State disagreements on taxation powers inhibiting Tribal economic development will emerge as another battleground in the near future.

TRIBAL SOVEREIGN IMMUNITY INHIBITS ACCESS TO CAPITAL AND INVESTMENTS ON RESERVATIONS; BUT POSITIVE RESOLUTION MECHANISMS EXIST

Private corporate investments in Indian reservation economies and Tribal access to capital are vital to economic development. The Lummi Indian Tribe aggressively and successfully pursued the establishment of a Foreign Trade Zone on the Lummi Reservation chartered by the Tribe and approved by the Foreign Trade Zone Board to attract both foreign and domestic corporations. Unfortunately, corporate American and private banks have misgivings about American Indian Tribes and our sovereign immunity status.

Two bills before the 100th Congress offer positive opportunities for Tribal development, although the likelihood of their passage is questionable. The "Indian Development Finance Corporation Act" (S. 721 and H.R. 2455) would create a partnership financial lending institution fashioned after the World Bank between the United States and Indian Tribes. The Indian Economic Development Act of 1987 (S. 788 and H.R. 1759) would permit economic enterprise zones on Indian reservations offering tax incentives and regulatory relief as incentives for corporate investments. The fear of Tribal sovereign immunity still looms and some have suggested Tribes should relinquish their sovereign immunity in lieu of potential business investments.

I suggest, as we have done several times before with Congress, that a "political risk insurance" structure be offered to the American business community as incentive to invest in Indian Country. I believe the political risk insurance function should be provided through existing quasi-government agencies and private insurance companies by legislatively requiring them to expand their portfolios to Indian reservations.

Political risk insurance has been offered by the United States to the American business community as an incentive to invest in Third World Countries. Indian Tribal governments are not unlike Micronesia, Puerto Rico, or other Caribbean and Pacific Island nations other than we are generally surrounded by United States territory rather than oceans.

As a prime example, the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) was created by the United States in the late 1940's to ensure investments against currency inconvertibility. The OPIC evolved in the 1950's to provide coverage for expropriation and war and expanded in the 1960's to cover revolution and insurrection as well as offer loan guarantees and feasibility study assistance. By

the 1970's OPIC was established as a separate, business-oriented agency mandated to:

"mobilize and facilitate the participation of United States private capital and skills in the economic and social development of less developed, friendly countries and areas."

The OPIC promotional literature describes the operations as providing:

"qualified investors with insurance against certain political risks; loan guarantees, direct loans to small businesses and cooperatives, and a variety of pre-investment and investment-encouragement programs. All are designed to reduce the perceived stumbling blocks and risks associated with overseas investment."

If we spoke of a Tribal Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) and inserted the term "Indian Reservation" for their terms "overseas" or "less developed, friendly countries and areas," wouldn't we be describing a proven effective Federal initiative?

Tribal political risk insurance, guaranteed by the Federal government as is the case of OPIC insurance, would insure investors against losses directly attributable to Tribal government actions which negatively impact corporate operations. As with any insurance operations, both the Tribal governments and investing corporations would seek to avoid a "bad risk" label as an incentive to resolve differences.

THE BUREAUCRACY NOW IMPEDES AND FRUSTRATES TRIBAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Federal bureaucracy, particularly the BIA and IHS, but also other Federal agencies, impede and frustrate Tribal economic and social growth as currently structured. The BIA system has grown incrementally over the years to address an ever-broadening array of Indian needs. But the system now usurps the majority of resources as a matter of tradition as Tribes demand greater resources as a matter of tradition as Tribes demand greater participation. The IHS system, buried in the Health and Human Services Department, offers field services on thinly stretched budgets while an unidentified management mass gobbles up resources and an unaccessible bureaucratic layer make policy. The other Federal agencies, aside from special legislated units designed to assist Indian Country, shirk their responsibility to us due to the existence of the BIA/IHS or block access to resources with administrative mechanisms.

The Federal programs, by nature of their targeted assistance, create their own casualties in the Tribes. Imposed Federal limitations often clash with our cultural values when individuals are excluded from employment due to academic skills or families receive limited assistance when truly in need due to program guidelines. The lack of flexibility in Federal programs inhibits their effectiveness and usefulness. This is especially true with the problem of dysfunctional families. The significance of our culture is based on families and their extended families.

The current Federal system, in general, now impedes Lummi development initiatives. The Lummi Indian Tribe is the largest of twelve Tribal governments served by the BIA Puget Sound Agency. Our problems stem from a growing frustration with the multi-Tribe-Agency system; the continued disregard and apparent disdain for Tribal priorities in the creation of administration policy; the ever-increasing entanglements of regulations and red tape; and, the obvious unwillingness of other Federal agencies to assume responsibilities in Indian Country. As examples of these frustrations, we cite the following:

Large Sums Are Expended To Educate Lummi Youth, But Tribe Has Very Little Control: Elderly and Youth often are Excluded

The Federal government expends sizeable funds each year targeted to Lummi education, but the Tribe has minimal control over how our youth are educated. The Department of Education spends, through the State or directly to local school districts, funding directly attributable to the presence of Lummi youth such as Impact Aid, but we have little, if any, input in program priorities or focus. Education funding for the BIA is scattered into separate programs managed by the Puget Sound Agency. Although we've sought to contract and consolidate BIA funding to establish a meaningful education effort, our requests have been thwarted due to the multi-Tribe Agency problem and limited funds.

The design of specific programs to assist particular ages generally excludes the wholeness of the education process. The elderly and young, those important linkages to our past and future, are vital elements to our society. Yet, their interaction is often limited by program rules and regulations.

Tribal Staff Rely on Federal Directions; Tribal Membership Cycle of Generational Dependency Difficult to Redirect

The very nature of Federal contracting for multiple Federal programs with their respective guidelines and project officers create a cadre of Tribal staff more concerned with Federal directions than overall Tribal concerns. Administrative pockets naturally form with narrow focus to ensure future Federal favor in resource allocations. Although not an insurmountable problem, the Tribal management suffers as a consequence.

The greatest challenge the Lummi Tribe faces in achieving self-governance is to reverse the problem of generational cycles of dependence on the system. This false reality, imposed on our peoples' minds and reinforced by ingrained perceptions and behavior patterns, continues to destroy the fabric of our society; namely, the family. Although we've developed strategies to address this most basic Tribal concern, no BIA or IHS Federal agency programs specifically address the family unit. Many programs target assistance to separate elements depending on factors of age, skills, behavior, and employment to name a few. But we must coordinate these assistance efforts to symptoms with program managers keeping one eye focused on Federal guidelines and approval. Although we know what we would like to do to preserve the family in an encompassing, supportive, sensitive manner, we can't, due to the limitations of Federal mechanisms.

CYCLES OF DEPENDENCY ARE BEING BROKEN

Five generations of colonial dependency on others; five generations of extensive assimilation activities by the United States; five generations of our people denied the legitimacy of our culture and religion have taken a heavy toll on the Lummi people. Adults and children bear this societal scar of low self-esteem. Family units continue disintegration cycles with cohesiveness of parenting and values shattered by drugs and dependency.

The Lummi Tribe's goal of Tribal self-governance to manage our own affairs according to our own priorities with a minimum of Federal intrusion is to rejuvenate and redirect the character and spirit of the Lummi society. Our people know where we were and who you, the dominant society, think we are. With Tribal self-governance and growing economic independence, we expect to break those bonds and dependence within the individual, the family, and the Tribe. However faint in the past, we've always been a people with a conviction of hope. That is why we've survived and will, indeed, succeed.

The reliance on others, including technicians and lawyers, has been a crutch we need to discard. Intervention by others, without our direct control and guidance, creates once again that dependency.

TRIBES AND CONGRESS CAN CREATE MEANINGFUL SOLUTIONS, BUT EXISTING BUREAUCRACY WILL RESIST CHANGE AND CREATE BARRIERS

I truly believe Congress and American Indian Tribal leadership can create solutions to protect the Trust relationship and promote self-governance. The Federal bureaucracy, however, has stock-piled an arsenal of obstacles and are well trained in their application.

A fresh approach is needed to overcome these institutional obstacles. I do not believe the present system can be sufficiently repaired or restructured to effectively achieve the intent of the Congress or to serve the needs of Indian Tribes to become truly self-determining and self-sufficient.

It has been determined by numerous studies that very few of the dollars Congress appropriates to the BIA are actually spent addressing problems in Indian Country. Furthermore, the BIA's priority for these problems and their approach to these problems often conflict with the various perceptions of a diverse collection of independent Tribal entities across America. For true self-determination to become a reality, the Tribes must be allowed to direct all available resources to meet the greatest needs for that Tribe. This cannot be done by a Federal bureaucracy but only by a local strong Tribal government that shared the same values and concerns as the people being served.

I believe a grant-in-aid approach would be much more effective in accomplishing Tribal and Congressional goals to achieve Indian self-determination and self-reliance. Grant-in-aid would provide a direct appropriation of funds to the Tribe and by-pass the present BIA bureaucracy. The Tribal government would then appropriate the funds to address the Tribe's most pressing problems in the manner most effective for the particular circumstances.

The benefits of a grant-in-aid system would accrue to the Tribe, Congress, and society as a whole. The Tribe benefits from the increased self-respect it has as a separate but inclusive people that can now be expressed in self-directed action to improve their quality of life. The positive impacts of Congress' recognition of a Tribe's ability to handle its own affairs more effectively than can a collection of Federal employees in a distant city office building, would be as dramatic as they would be lasting.

The grant-in-aid approach is a much more efficient means of addressing Federal funds to the problems in Indian Country. It is expected the Tribe would receive three to five times the amount of funds it now receives to address pressing Tribal problems. Without additional appropriations, the Tribe would have greater resources to more effectively address Congressional concerns in a manner that accomplishes the unique needs and means of the Tribe.

The American society would perhaps be the biggest winner of a grant-in-aid system. It is society as a whole that pays for the inefficiencies of the present bureaucratic system and resulting dependence of Indian Tribes and individuals on Federal and State handouts. With true self-determination and the efficient transfer of funds from Congress to the Tribes, the Tribes will increase many times over their contribution to the national economy. Even more importantly, the perpetuation and growth of unique native cultures will avoid the slow strangulation imposed by the present system. It is the ability of this Country to accept and respect the wealth of diverse cultures - from immigrant Europeans - to immigrant Vietnamese, to native Indians - that have made it the envy of the world. Society is the greatest benefactor of national support of Indian Tribes and Indian Tribal governments.

TRIBAL SELF-GOVERNANCE WILL BE THE KEY TO ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE

The basic issue confronting us today is a cumbersome, unwieldy bureaucracy built layer upon layer over the years being pressured by frustrated Tribal governments yearning for independence in the management of their affairs and seeking a larger share of the resources allocated for their benefit.

We seek the opportunity to govern ourselves as recognized sovereigns nations. But we question the will and resolve of the Congress, established Federal systems, and the general public to allow this logical concept to become a reality. Established political systems and entrenched bureaucracies stand as formidable obstacles.

The great Felix Cohen stated the issue so well many years ago:

The most basic of all Indian rights, the right of self-government, is the Indian's last defense against administrative oppression, for in a realm where the states are powerless to govern and where the Congress, occupied with more pressing national affairs, cannot govern wisely and well, there remains a large no man's-land in which government can emanate only from officials of the Interior Department or from the Indians themselves. Self-government is thus the Indians' only alternative to rule by a government department. (Handbook of Federal Indian Law, 1942; page 122.)

For Tribal governments to achieve self-governance, we must reestablish the government-to-government relations between Indian Tribes and the United States. Although President Reagan's White House Indian Policy of January 1983 spoke eloquently of "government-to-government" relations, this policy once again has been proven most hollow.

Tribal self-governance, including jurisdiction and sovereignty, must be recognized by the United States and its citizenry.

Economic theories for development on reservations should reflect the view of promoting "self-sustaining economy which provides jobs for tribal members, reinforces local custom and social organization, and enriches the culture without

damaging the natural resources of Indian culture or Indian culture values." This requires the tribal economies be understood in their specific context, not merely in terms of the U.S. economy.

Tribal control of natural resources and land is essential to renewing tribal economies. This requires that the United States and its states pull-back from their efforts to increase control over these resources.

An example of control and utilization of the natural resources is the recent Lummi economic development initiatives in our fisheries. Due to the Boldt decision reserving fifty percent of the commercial harvest of salmon in our "usual and accustomed" areas, the Pacific Northwest Tribes were parties to the negotiations of the 1985 U.S. - Canada Pacific Salmon treaty. Twenty-four Pacific Northwest Tribal representatives were substantively involved in the treaty negotiation process involving the Departments of State-Commerce-Interior, the States of Washington-Oregon-Alaska, and Canadian representatives. Tribal representatives, as included in the Treaty, serve on the Commission and fisheries panels. The Lummi Tribal government represents its fisheries resource interest as a participant in this international treaty.

The Lummi Tribe has continued with traditional economic activities by concentrating on commercial fishing. We do what we do best. We've begun to vertically integrate our fishing industry with cold storage and processing facilities, domestic and international marketing, and development of support service industries to maximize dollar utilization within the Lummi reservation. A planned commercial and recreational marina will expand our economic operations utilizing our natural resources. In time, we envision that the Lummi economy with impact local and regional employment.

The political relationship between each Indian Nation and the United States must be formalized into a framework of government-to-government relations based on mutual respect. Indian Nations must be permitted to fully govern themselves, within their boundaries.

Finally, we must all recognize that Indian Nations are not so much dependent on the United States as they are being used by the United States for the benefit of the U.S. economy.

Am I a dreamer? Am I politically naive? Will this ever be a reality for historians to record? Yes, I believe this to be possible if we truly live in a just society governed by its Constitution. But we will need your help to educate America.

I refer you historians to review the record of the December 2, 1987 hearing of the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs concerning Senate Concurrent Resolution 76. This Congressional Resolution:

- "reaffirms the constitutionally recognized government-to-government relationship with Indian Tribes..."
- "Specifically acknowledges and reaffirms the trust responsibility and obligations of the United States Government to Indian Tribes, including Alaskan Natives, for their preservation, protection, and enhancement..."
- "acknowledges the need to exercise the utmost good faith in upholding treaties with the various Tribes, as the Tribes understood them to be..."

The hearing record is a most insightful contribution to the foundations of our historic relationship based on mutual sovereign respect.

I would also advise your attention to the recently introduced Title III of S. 1703, the "Indian Self-Determination Act of 1987" entitled the "Tribal Self-

Governance Research and Demonstration Project." This legislation, introduced February 3, 1987, designates ten tribal governments to participate in a five year experiment in which the resources of the BIA at all levels are turned over to Tribal governments under negotiated agreement. Participating tribes will assume major responsibilities and risks and the BIA will retain specified responsibilities. I am proud that the Lummi Tribe is a participant in this historic initiative.

The American society would perhaps be the biggest winner of a successful transition to Tribal self-governance. It is society as a whole that pays for the inefficiencies of the present bureaucratic system and resulting dependence of Indian Tribes and individuals on Federal assistance and services. With true self-determination and the efficient transfer of funds from Congress to the Tribes, the Tribes will increase many times over their contribution to the national economy. Even more importantly, the perpetuation and growth of unique native cultures will avoid the slow strangulation imposed by the present system. It is the ability of this Country to accept and respect the wealth of diverse cultures that have made it the envy of the world. Society is the greatest benefactor of national support of Indian Tribes and Indian Tribal governments.

OVERCOMING ECONOMIC DEPENDENCY: A HISTORIAN'S PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

Floyd A. O'Neil

Perhaps a more appropriate title for my speech might be "The Confessions of an Economic Dependent." I have not yet discovered in my career an economically independent person. We depend upon the economics of government services, of transportation, of shared resources in a world that is short of resources. We are so economically interdependent that much of our political life is attached to the question of our dependency. In a capitalistic system we are economically dependent on those who save. But we Americans have almost lost our ability to save, making us economically dependent on foreign people who are better at saving than we are: now, we are all economic dependents of other nations. Further than this I am personally an economic dependent. The center I direct is dependent on the state of Utah for the taxes which support it. I am dependent on foundations, government agencies, and private individuals who fund what I do. I am economically dependent upon the income that I have from my job. Thank God for her income! Moreover, I am in part economically dependent on the income from lands that were taken from the Ute people who dwelled in Utah before my people arrived. And so while the theme of our conference, "Overcoming Dependency," is a well-understood goal, I want us all to begin by understanding that economic independence is a myth.

When I was a youngster the sources of our Indian neighbors' income was a matter of constant discussion. It was more than just passing comments, it was an issue. And inasmuch as the great depression was upon us and times were particularly tough, the problem for the non-Indians of staying off the dole became a matter of pride. To say the area in which I lived was an economic disaster area is to understate the problem.

Most of the Ute Reservation in Northeastern Utah stretched across two huge counties. These counties were both poor partly because the reservation had only been open to white settlement for twenty-four years when the depression began in 1929. As a matter of fact, in Duchesne County, the percentage of people on public welfare soared to an astounding 72% at a time when economic depression and drought made life far less than dignified. Because of the ability of the Utes to hunt and fish, and because they had a government settlement for waters, they often dwelled at a standard of living substantially better than their white neighbors.

Most historians would describe those Utes as economic dependents. But I would like you to think of their white neighbors as existing in greater economic dependency than the Indian people who dwelt nearby.

In David Lewis' fine paper he has characterized the Ute's attempts at farming. As one can tell it took a lot of government pushing and shoving to get any of them to farm, and most of them steadfastly refused. Those white among us who did farm lived little better even when our farms were successful. The cost of taxes, the cost of water and of maintaining irrigation ditches, and the cost of seed meant that profits were often non-existent.

I remember that the greatest of the occupations the Utes could involve themselves in which brought approbation from their white neighbors were those of cattlemen or sheepmen. The reservation on which they lived was most suitable for cattle and sheep raising, and the abandonment rate of the farms in their area has been more than 50% in the Twentieth Century. The Indians hated farming and still do. They all owned horses, loved saddles, wore cowboy clothing, and the first music they adopted from outside of the Ute tradition was cowboy music, but all these subtle hints were somehow lost on the Congress and its federal bureaucracy. I remember the continuing pressure to keep the Utes on the farm plowing, sowing, and reaping in spite of their instincts. No dream in American history has died such a ragtag death as the death of farming on American Indian reservations. Jeffersonian agrarianism is still around and it reaches levels of stupidity which are astounding. Why couldn't Congress stop? Why did so many continue to support it?

While dealing with this topic I would like to repeat a comment which I first heard from my father in 1938 when he read the statistics concerning what had been raised by the American Indians of the Uintah Ouray reservation in the preceding year. He exclaimed that the record was preposterous, and inaccurate. I believed him then, and I still believe that the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs were colored, bad, and distorted. It was thus so that desperate men hoping to keep their jobs in times of economic stress could portray more success than ever was evident. Figures don't lie, but liars figure. As a historian I must insist that the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs must be used with great caution, because every method of proof that farming was succeeding can be found in the records contained in the Federal Records Centers and in the National Archives. If those successes were as great as the records claim, why is there so little land under cultivation today? The truth is that the white BIA employees, called "Indian farmers," did as much farming as they possibly could, and worked with the individual farmers to a greater degree than most of us are now willing to admit. The so-called growing independence portrayed in the records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs from the 1880s until the depths of the Great Depression reveal a belief that must be dealt with with skepticism and the use of a great many oral interviews. Only a little of this oral history has been collected, and what has been collected has not concentrated enough on the truly tough questions about Indian farming.

Not all reservations can be compared to the Utes', or for that matter to many of the other reservations where farming has collapsed. Agriculture among the Pueblo Indians was far more prosperous than in the so-called "wild tribes." But even among the Pueblo people the history of the Twentieth Century is the history of the decline of agriculture. The decline is more striking at places like Santa Ana Pueblo where nearly all of the tribal lands lying along the well-watered and fertile banks of the Rio Grande remain unfarmed or under marginal leases with local farmers. The decline of agriculture does not necessarily mean increasing dependence on the government. Since World War II increasing numbers of Pueblo Indians have derived incomes from wage and salary paying jobs. Some agriculture still remains, some herding still remains, but by the large the economies of the Rio Grande Pueblos have become job economies.

During the Great Depression my father owned one farm and leased two Indian farms. Because leasing was a tough area from which to derive much income, the

Bureau officially discouraged it in favor of Indian people farming their own land. Widows and orphan children usually leased their lands, of course, and in any case most of the Indians would rather see their land leased than try to farm it themselves. They commented that the lease paid more than they could get the land to yield for them after having worked the fields. I remember late each winter when Indian people would come to my father and ask him to apply for a lease for their land. My father was always gentle but he'd firmly turn down the leases saying that those lands adjacent to his which were for lease were easier to manage and that he could not possibly handle more than he already had.

It has always astonished me that the banks, the rich, the investors, the corporations, and the whites in general could lease their lands and property and do with their time whatever they pleased. If an Indian did the same, he was described as shiftless, worthless, and lazy. The meager yield of the farms I was familiar with confirmed my opinion at an early age that among America's brightest people are those who refuse to farm. I thought the lives of my Indian friends were vastly superior to mine;hauling hay, feeding hogs, and cleaning eggs were not exactly what I considered to be pursuits of noble purpose.

As one views the history of the various tribes he comes to an inescapable conclusion: For the amount of wealth they own the Indian population has derived remarkably little income. Let me cite an experience. I will not indicate in which tribe it occurred because many of the same tribal officials are still in office and were embarrassed by the experience. Over lunch four years ago we were discussing economic development. Several questions came to me about the historical development of certain tribal interests and property. At the end of these discussions I asked the tribal chairman and the tribal business manager what the net value of this reservation was worth. They quickly calculated the number of farm acres, the value of their mineral deposits and of their physical properties, and estimated that their rather large reservation was worth approximately one billion dollars. I then asked what the one billion dollars of properties yielded in terms of income. The answer was \$5,700,000. I then asked them to tell me what rate of return that represented. As it turned out the interest rate was a little less than six tenths of one percent per annum. It was a capricious thing to do. The ten or twelve people at the luncheon were all cast into an immediate and deep gloom. The fact that a tax-free land area could not produce a one percent rate of return indicated that there was something tragically wrong in the economy. I have not and will not do that stupid trick again.

Upon reflection, a great amount of the arid West is capable of producing very little wealth, but this tribe is in a river valley and the farm land is good. Within this tribe, however, there is little ethic for development because the development that has taken place over the years has been government sponsored and administration funded, and has usually failed. One of the first lessons that any educator learns is that success builds, failure destroys. Therefore, a series of repeated failures has built a skepticism which is enervating and destructive. This opens a big can of worms.

In the 1960s we saw a series of tribes enter into a long list of activities that spelled disaster. The tribes were assisted in building motels, tanneries, camping facilities, tourist enterprises, electronics factories, furniture and cabinetry

factories, recreational investments of a dizzying variety, and craft cooperatives. It seemed that Indian America was almost overwhelmed, but the economic planners were filled with the good intentions with which the road to hell is paved. In a few instances these ventures succeeded. In most they failed, and the tribes were left holding the debts.

One of the many problems that we have to face as we evaluate all of this information is that in corporate America and especially in the retail facet of it, American businesses create a very competitive atmosphere. Despite the amount of enthusiasm raised among tribal people for gathering into the melee of retail trade or service-providing America, the tribal people simply were overwhelmed by their lack of entrepreneurial skills needed to survive in that kind of an atmosphere.

The Utes at Uintah Ouray built a resort with a new man-made lake and expensive, inappropriate architecture, and received numerous federal grants for training to end the problem of unemployment on their reservation. The facility was beautiful, the market existed, but the enterprise failed. Not only did it fail, but it lost money for fourteen years before it was finally closed. The people who did the training were administrators, but impractical. The feasibility studies were a travesty. The Utes simply did not want to be service providers. One middle-aged widow whom I have known for forty-five years exclaimed to me about quitting her job at the resort, "I can not see living my life cleaning the toilets after white tourists: I would rather starve!"

One of the things that the feasibility study did not include with any degree of accuracy at all was the attitude of the Ute people themselves toward providing the labor for the service jobs required. If feasibility studies are to be used, new instruments for research must be developed using the deep involvement of American Indians who have long experience as administrators. A feasibility study done at Uintah Ouray by an out-of-state corporation with no local personnel involved is an example of the madness that has continued on American Indian economic development projects for a quarter of a century. What is feasible in the general market is usually not feasible to a reservation economy, and we continue to allow this misplacing of logic to continue. In Bird Baylor's book Yes is Better Than No, she points out that in our society we look for the favorable answers. Whites love "Yes." But the tribes were left with the bills. For now, give me a barrel full of skeptics for each of these giddy dreamers. The most needed study for the economies of the American Indians is "How Feasible is a Feasibility study?"

A topic I address with some trepidation because in the past it has always carried a great deal of controversy is the subject of American corporations and American Indian tribes. The complexities of these bedfellows boggles the brain. Corporations under American law are legal "persons" (a law with which I do not agree). As these legal persons operate within the economy they have a set of mandates which are separate and distinct from most agendas common to American Indian reservations. They are not set up so that they might work on American Indian reservations. They were created for the efficient use of capital and to produce profits. When these ends are not met you see bankruptcy, firings, and disorder. This disorder is usually accompanied by loud screams from investors, as well as accusations, law suits, and other unpleasant activities not to

be discussed here. It takes a large corporation indeed to be able to finance substantial experimental ventures such as those attempted on American Indian reservations. The Hewlett-Packard experience at Navajo, for example, is only one of a long list of these large corporations whose corporate records are filled with letters of great lamentation by the occasional capitalist who believes that corporate America can solve the economic problems of American Indians. Most corporate officers have very strict parameters, within which they must operate. Without obeying those strict parameters and producing profits in addition, their tenure is but momentary.

When developers attempt to make liaison between these two disparate groups, caution, planning, and long deliberation should be mandatory. It has been proven that the ceremonial life of American Indians is not well understood by men operating factories. And so as we approach the corporate world, where the source of much of the capital for development exists, let's not tell them that the great advantage they will have is a pool of anxious, inexpensive labor awaiting them. The truth is that reality is far different from that. It is a complex sociological matrix in each of the Indian communities wherever they are in the U.S. As members of the dominant culture it is not always easy for us to understand that what we learned and how we developed after centuries of serfdom in Europe, economic serfdom in the industrial revolution, and the struggle which American labor went through until 1940 is not easily transferred to another culture, and we therefore shouldn't expect Indian work habits to parallel those of the dominant culture. We have defied logic far too long, and our training programs have been ridiculously shortsighted. We have used all of the presuppositions of a millennium of history from Europe and attempted to insert them into reservations where the tribal ethic is very much alive and well. This does not assume that American Indians will not work as hard or as long as those of us from Europe and Asia. As a matter of fact, those who do beading, basketry, pottery, and jewelry work longer and harder for their dollars than almost any other group of Americans I know. But there is a difference and it is profound. Their individuality is maintained. Our cultural values are so ingrained that we carry our baggage to their economies.

May I hasten to say that I have no disparagement of beading, of basketry, of pottery, of jewelry, of quilt making, or any of the handicrafts of the American Indian peoples. I take great joy in the fact that they are still at it for it allows them to express their culture and art, and in spite of the low wages that all but a select few receive, it has that indescribable something which is called satisfaction in work. It is indeed a good thing that my wife loves Indian art as much as I, for we have bought enough that we are almost up to our arm pits in the stuff and still take great pleasure in finding more that is of the quality we love.

There is another facet about American Indian craftwork that I find remarkable; it does not depend to any degree on foreign capital or the building of an intrusive industry or factory in those communities. Papago baskets usually represent native plants, native talent, and time.

The traditional keys to advancement in society are hard work, innovation, careful saving, and privileged knowledge. In the last category I include those who are lucky enough to receive the highest levels of education within the

quality institutions of higher learning. I believe that American Indians work as hard as any other ethnic group given their own lifestyles and their own set of values. There is a component of this work which is included in maintaining religion and ceremony which I find to be an astounding burden on certain people. No single impression is more vivid from my twenty years of working at Zuni Pueblo than the impression that the labor. It has been difficult for some American Indian people to understand the white culture, never mind trying to innovate in the field of new goods and services which are marketable to the general population.

As planners and as thoughtful observers of the passing scene, it seems that we must look far more closely and intentionally at American Indian education. In my lifetime I have never known a willingly unemployed Indian college graduate Indian who has remained in that condition for very long. Those who have economic security are among the fortunate few whose tribes possess salable resources or who have a trade, a skill, or an education with salable skills attached to it.

The history of our attempt to create and define employment for the Indians is a long story indeed, and I will not burden you with it. As a child growing up I watched men trained as brick masons return to a reservation that built with lumber, men trained as carpenters' apprentices who couldn't find jobs, men trained as shoemakers with no possible hope of getting the several thousand dollars worth of capital goods that were required to begin a shoemaking business, and like those around me I took a very dim view of the kinds of education being offered to American Indians.

Another thing that we and the planners have often failed to embrace is that the American Indian style of learning emphasizes mentorship. Those American Indians who have studied in my institution and have had practical jobs in a department or in a center where a senior person can work at their sides have developed distinctly more rapidly than their fellow students who are cast adrift within the academic world. Mentorship provides a humanizing element.

Gone are the days that I remember in the 1930s when the phrase among the Utes who were opposed to sending their kids away to college was a simple quote, "Educate your son and create a stranger," or, more insulting, "Educate your son and create a white man." We often forget how much of our education in English literature, history, or the humanities in general reinforces the dominant culture. the plays, the poetry, the music and the musicals, these are designed to integrate people more deeply into the culture that we know and revere. To develop the kind of confidence that American Indian college students need in order to perform well in both cultures, the Indian students must not just learn what we expect of our white students, but they must also learn a curriculum quite apart from the one we teach on our campuses. In spite of our development of American Indian studies programs, we have done precious little to integrate our American Indian students into an economy in which they are comfortable with who they are, what they are, and where they are. The psychological displacements take their toll. The toll is often in economic efficiency and adaptability.

The conditions on American Indian reservations are bad but not hopeless. Despite the recent years in which a careless nation has turned its back on American Indian education and the number of native Americans entering college has declined along with the number who are graduating, we must not despair.

Education is still the key. In spite of our ineptitude, in spite of the unyielding and often careless nature of the institutions we represent, there is hope. The number of American Indian attorneys has risen rapidly. The numbers who are now holding jobs within the Bureau of Indian Affairs is simply a revolution. Still, there is a crying need to produce better at the school than we have done in the past. While the Bureau of Indian Affairs may now be largely occupied by American Indians, the school houses are not. Further, the number of American Indians impacting and changing colleges remains small.

Change in America is hard. but I must end on a brighter note. The tribe I grew up with were New Stone Age folk 140 years ago. The reversals of policy, adaptations, and psychological changes forced upon them have not destroyed their identity, and their population is now increasing. That is a triumph. Further, the economic presuppositions and skills that are used by whites in everyday life were learned as long ago as Babylon. Do not expect an instant solution to transforming American Indian communities. Such is not going to happen. Well-intentioned men and women of all races, with patience, honesty, and hard work, will help to solve the problems of adaptation within an economy and a society that will provide a better future if a better future is to be had.

NEW DIRECTION IN THE ECONOMIC HISTORY OF AMERICAN INDIANS

Daniel H. Usner, Jr.
Department Of History
Cornell University

The papers presented at this conference illustrate that different impressions of what economic dependency means are being brought to American Indian history. Historians have long used "dependence" as a catch phrase, loosely applying it to the consequences of Indian contact with European commerce or politics. Social scientists have sought a more precise definition of the unequal relationship that evolved between expanding capitalist nations and subjugated traditional societies. A theory of dependency originated in Third World economics and sociology during the 1960s, challenging concepts of poverty and development contained in neoclassical economic thought. A growing number of anthropologists and sociologists are finding this "dependency" model, which emphasizes the way different peoples were integrated into a world economy, to be useful in their studies of North American Indians. Some historians are even revising their assumptions about and approaches to the livelihood of American Indians in line with this alternative to modernization theory. But they continue to evince the caution toward generalizations and models characteristic of the historical profession.

For a new generation of scholars interested in the economic history of American Indians, the notable absence of Indians in general economic histories of the United States is a source of great frustration. References to the fur trade and to Indian land are included in such texts, but little effort is made to reinterpret national or regional economic development in light of the Indian experience.¹ This neglect is especially ironic because a deeply encrusted economic premise about Indians lies beneath the history of the United States. Since the formative years of liberal economic thought, the notion that Indians underused their land has been a maxim in the study of American economic development. Adam Smith declared in 1776 that "The colony of a civilized nation which takes possession, either of waste country, or of one so thinly inhabited, that the natives easily give place to the new settlers, advances more rapidly to wealth and greatness than any other human society." A century later Frederick Jackson Turner based his explanation of the role of "free land" in American history upon economists' and anthropologists' use of stages in social evolution. Far into the twentieth century, scholars have locked Indian livelihood into a hunting-gathering stage, which supposedly represents the primitive step in the economic development of all human societies. An economic fragility is usually attributed to their living at such a low stage, automatically and conveniently explaining how Indians became dependent upon whites.²

The Newberry Library conference clearly indicates that current scholarship is finally combatting this flawed evolutionary model. Although their backgrounds and methods vary widely, all participants take a wider context of economic change into account. As demonstrated in the recent works of Richard White and William Cronon, keeping an eye on the bigger picture is implicitly a dependency approach. Connections forged between peoples in specific places and times constitute much more fertile ground for investigation than did theoretical categories and stages.³ Historians ought to be interested in how Indian economic life became integrated into the world economy and eventually the

national economy of the United States. Shepard Krech and William Swagerty examine the fur trade in terms of merchant capitalism, showing the interconnectedness of that commerce with other activities in distant markets. Leonard Carlson and David Lewis suggest that the plight of Indian farmers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries cannot be understood apart from the nationwide ups and downs in American agriculture. Peter Iverson likewise considers the great odds faced by Indian cattle raisers in the overall ranching economy of the West. David Vinje compares the Indian situation to Nebraska's capitulation to a corporation and relates it to the Third World's level of wages. In his personal reflections about economic dependency, Chief Phillip Martin also referred to competition with Third World countries. Bahe Billy observed that the Navajos have become acutely conscious about making economic decisions in a "post-industrial age." Ron Trosper also related economic projects on Indian reservations to general economic changes since World War II. Larry Kinley put the issue of allocating fish in the Pacific Northwest within the larger context of inter-state and international fishing.

Another significant innovation represented at this conference is the examination of Indian livelihood in terms of economic strategies. By focusing on decisions made by Indian people themselves, we can replace the stereotype of passive victims of dependence with a more accurate picture of resourceful participants in economic change. In their assessment of pressures imposed by the fur trade, Krech refers to "different patterns of adaptation" and Swagerty to "options of economic lifeways." A notable contrast between Carlson's and Lewis's treatments of agriculture lies in their differing degrees of sensitivity to Indian initiatives. Lewis highlights Indian resistance to agricultural policy, while Carlson leaves the reader with an impression that "opportunities, values and preferences" simply fell into place. Although phrases like "business accommodation" and "market compromise" seem inappropriate, H. Craig Miner does rescue the roles and options actually taken by late nineteenth-century Indians from an unforeseen, and not inevitable, outcome.

But if Indian efforts to avoid or overcome dependence are to be more fully understood, informal economic activities must also be included in these analyses. The fur trade was not the only network of Indian-colonial exchange. Indians sold a wide variety of foods and manufactures and provided labor and other services in less formal markets. Since colonial times, in fact, many Indian communities have tried to multiply their forms of economic contact with non-Indians in order to preserve their autonomy, a strategy that Diane Rothenberg characterizes as "dispersing networks horizontally." Traditional means of livelihood and the circulation of goods through kinship relations still constitute important subsistence strategies, even among Indian communities that appear to be very dependent upon outside sources of income. If historians focus only on the more visible institutions, like the fur trade or agricultural policy, they will underestimate the role played by face-to-face and day-to-day activities in the struggle against dependency.

Emphasis on economic strategies, however, can lead us to a dangerous pitfall, a pitfall troubling the new social history in general. Close-up analysis of initiatives taken inside Indian communities must not cause us to lose sight of power. Celebrations of successful resistance should not be written where none is warranted. Outsiders brought force and coercion to their economic relations with Indians, creating insuperable pressures and undermining self-control. Indian people definitely influenced the disparity between what policy-makers intended to do and what actually resulted from their efforts. But the intentions of

commercial and government institutions, as well as the means they employed to pursue them, still deserve our attention. Colonialism also fomented new kinds of socioeconomic differentiation within Indian societies that must be calculated in any new understanding of economic change. Any incongruence between individual/family and tribal/community benefits derived from economic strategies must likewise be examined. In pursuit of these challenges, historians studying the economic life of American Indians can learn much from both the strengths and weaknesses in the scholarship on land-use traditions and work habits among immigrants, slaves, yeomen farmers, etc.⁴

The relationship between livelihood and culture is certainly a key to understanding the struggle against dependency, but is only touched slightly in the papers presented at this conference. Because of the new attention given to Indian initiative and resistance, we can speak more confidently about aspects of traditional culture persisting in fur trade, displacement, reservation life, and industrial development. The endurance or resilience of cultural traditions, despite unequal relations, is indeed in evidence. But isn't the nexus of economy and culture more dynamic and complicated? Don't we need to learn about Indian definitions of the relationship called "dependency." Mary Pete informs us, for example, that Nelson Island people view themselves as dependent on the herring. The authors should investigate further some promising clues found in their work. Describing the frustrations of traders besieged by Indian demands, in what one called a "spoiled wilderness," Swagerty hints at the importance played by cultural difference in economic exchange. Arthur Ray provides additional evidence when he observes that natives saw debt as a reciprocal obligation and lists the characterizations of Indian behavior made by post managers. Lewis mentions the "metaphorical attacks" waged by the Utes against U.S. agricultural reformers. Among the scholars at this conference, Iverson makes the most significant contribution to the study of culture by assessing a particular economic activity in light of identity, symbol, and style.

Finally, the relationship between economic development and political autonomy deserves more attention. Throughout the long period of Indian treaty-making with European nations and the United States, diplomacy and commerce were inextricably intertwined. While intercolonial and intertribal competition over trade contributed to the destruction of many Indian groups, some Indian nations strengthened their political position through their economic relations with colonial powers. All of the major policies implemented by the United States government-- civilization, removal, reservation, allotment, reorganization, and self-determination--have targeted both the economic life and political status of American Indians as objects of reform. Their impact on Indian livelihood and sovereignty has been unquestionable, although often in a manner not anticipated by the policymakers. Efforts in the early national period to assimilate Indians through economic engineering, for example, reinforced the capacity of the Cherokees and other tribes to assert their political autonomy. As John Quincy Adams explained to Congress in 1828, "When we have had the rare good fortune of teaching them the arts of civilization and the doctrines of Christianity, we have unexpectedly found them forming in the midst of ourselves, communities claiming to be independent of ours and rivals of sovereignty within the territories of our Union."⁵

Since the beginnings of colonialism in North America, the economic life of American Indians has been the subject of ideological manipulation. Representations of their pre-contact livelihood as either primitive or idyllic served the interests of European ideologues, while expansionists rationalized

conquest and displacement by portraying Indians as inferior users of the natural world. As Francis Jennings forcefully reminds us, the writing of history played an integral part in that ideological process.⁶ Now we are in the midst of the latest polemical flourish over errors and evils reflected in the economic condition of American Indians, as current policy-makers consider new ways of implanting what they call capitalism in Indian communities.⁷ Our understanding of the economic history of American Indians is therefore an urgent matter, and we must be mindful of how our scholarship relates to and affects contemporary politics. While some critics of the dependency approach to Indian history might accuse it of containing an ideological bias of its own, the participants in this conference have revealed that the new direction--with its emphases on wider contexts and on people's resourcefulness--will help put older, more simplistic characterizations of Indian livelihood to rest.

END NOTES

1. For recent examples, see John J. McCusker and Russell R. Menard, The Economy of British America, 1607-1789 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985), and Stuart Bruchey, The Wealth of the Nation: An Economic History of the United States (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988).
2. Adam Smith, An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations (2 volumes, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), II, 564; Frederick Jackson Turner, The Frontier in American History (New York: H. Holt & Co., 1920), 11-13.
3. Richard White, The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983); William Cronon, Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England (New York: Hill & Wang, 1983).
4. Pertinent examples include Peter H. Wood, Black Majority: Negroes in Colonial South Carolina from 1670 through the Stono Rebellion (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974); Steven Hahn, The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); and David Thelen, Paths of Resistance: Tradition and Dignity in Industrializing Missouri (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986).
5. Francis Paul Prucha, American Indian Policy in the Formative Years: The Indian Trade and Intercourse Acts, 1790-1834 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962).
6. Francis Jennings, The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1975).
7. Former Secretary of Interior James Watt's televised statement about "the failures of socialism" is the most familiar example of ideological manipulation. For printed samples, see James Cook, "Help wanted--work, not handouts," Forbes, May 4, 1987, pp. 68-71; and Ted Williams, "On the Reservation: America's

Apartheid," National Review, May 8, 1987, pp. 28-30.